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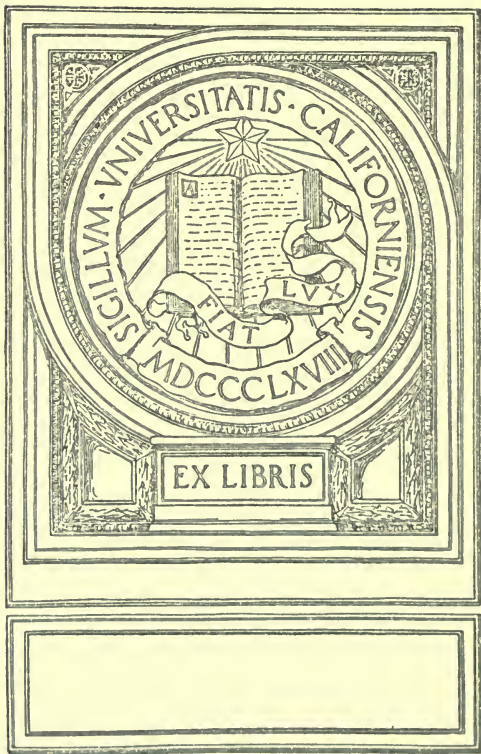


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THE LIFE OF HOMER

—

SNIDER



**The Collected Writings
of DENTON J. SNIDER**

**A BIOGRAPHIC OUTLINE
OF
HOMER**

*On one and other side, Trojan and Greek
Set all on hazard—and I am come.*

*Frown on, yon Heavens, effect your rage with speed!
Sit, Gods, on your thrones and smile at Troy.*

*Cry, Trojans, cry! lend me ten thousand eyes!
And I will fill them with prophetic tears.*

Shakespeare.

*Denn wer wage mit Göttern den Kampf—und wer mit dem Einen [Homerus]?
Doch Homeride zu sein, auch nur als letzter, ist schön.*

Goethe.

*Quegli 'e Omero, poeta sovrano.
(Homer is he, sovereign poet.)*

*Vidi adunar la bella scuola
Di quel signor dell' altissimo canto
Che sovra gli altri, com' aquila, vola.
(I saw banded together the beautiful school
Taught by the lord of loftiest song
Whose flight, like the eagle's, outsoars all the rest of us.)*

Dante.

A BIOGRAPHIC OUTLINE
OF
HOMER

AS HE REVEALS HIMSELF IN HIS WORKS

BY
DENTON J. SNIDER

IN TWO PARTS,
PROSE AND VERSE



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HOMER'S LIFE LINES.

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PART SECOND.

HOMER IN CHIOS.

An epopee in ten songs, which accepts Chios as Homer's birthplace, whither the poet returns when an old man and founds a school of his singers known as the Homerids.

See page 219, etc., for title and contents.

Homer's Life-Lines

INTRODUCTION.

Why Homer now, after more than twenty-five centuries? Are we not sated with the real bloodshed of history, without adding to it that of poetry? Need we go back to Homer's old Troy for more war when we have had enough of it at our door? If the fighting and the gore were the only or the main result, then Homer's book might well be closed for all time. But there is something else which endures in Homer and keeps him more alive to-day than ever before. To find and to appropriate that eternal element of him will demand a new reading of his work in the light of present time.

And let us start with our prime proposition: the Trojan War as told by Homer was a World-War. Indeed the first World-War we may well deem it,

and the longest-lasting, for it is still going on to-day in the same place, with essentially the same battle-line and the same combatants (Greek and Oriental) fighting for the same ultimate principle, whose clash now involves directly and indirectly the two opposite hemispheres of our globe. Thus Homer appears the earliest and remains still the best recorder of that deepest, mightiest, ever-recurring conflict between Eastern and Western civilisation, which just at present is passing into a wholly new stage of its evolution.

Here let it be noted that in the foregoing fact lies the fundamental reason of Homer's supreme worth as a poet, and of his undying renown. He has seized upon the largest, most immortal theme in the World's History, and handled it in the worthiest and loftiest way. Still not his verse, not his language, not his descriptions, nor yet his purely literary excellence however great, are the main matter for his right appreciation; it is his subject in all its grandeur and universality which we are to grasp and to assimilate. And that is what vitally connects him with us here and now, with the present and also the future.

Not many months ago to-day's reader found in his morning paper an item of news somewhat after the following purport:

The Greek army led by King Constantine, has moved from the European side across the Egean, and has taken position on the battle-line against the Oriental foe arrayed along the coast and inland

of Asia Minor. In quite the same terms that ancient Trojan expedition, headed by King Agamemnon, might have been heralded, not by the printed page but by swift-footed messengers, not around the globe but over little Hellas. Still further, we learn that the headquarters of this last expedition, from which the assault is to proceed, will be located at Smyrna, distant not so very many miles from the plain of Troy—the scene of the battles of the *Iliad*, which now are evidently to be fought over again, not in the old but in the modern way. Will this new Trojan War evoke and inspire another Homer as its singer? The first one has told the story for once and forever—so for us too, here and now, if we read him aright.

Nor should we forget in this connection that Smyrna has become intimately intergrown with the name and fame of Homer. An ancient tradition has handed down that he was born in this old Greek city; more likely is the statement that he passed an important creative portion of his life there, and experienced in person on the spot the grand perennial conflict between Greek and Oriental, which gives the basic impulse, and content for his whole work. Quite probable it becomes, though not directly documented, that the poet composed his *Iliad* at Smyrna a century or two after the Trojan War, for this city, with its ever-present outlook upon Troy, must have been the very heart of the enormously prolific Trojan legend, from which the poet drew both material and

inspiration. Thus he lived in and partook of the early creative upgush of the great Tale of Troy, seemingly the most persistent and influential utterance of its kind yet recorded in literature.

At this point an explanatory gloss may be set down. Just these historic events occurring to-day on the borderland between Europe and Asia, are not only the latest but the best interpretation of Homer in his true and ultimate meaning. What lay primordially in his spirit and its song, doubtless unconscious and embryonic, we may now behold bursting into light more clearly than ever before. History has become our final instructor in Homer as it is in so much else, waking him up into a new consciousness, which is also expressive of our own age. The Wolfian theory, which slashed the old poet asunder and in some cases anatomized his living body into quivering gobbets, has run its course, and will soon be put into the large Homeric museum of dead caprices and learned curiosities. The search now perceptibly drives in the other direction: it will find the pervasive psychological unity which winds through and indeed vivifies both the poet's work and himself in his work.

Of course the by far largest part of the writings about Homer (apart from textual and grammatical exegesis) is known under the label of literary criticism, which for the most part deals with the poet's beauties of expression, with his vivid story-telling art, and with his many-sided skill in characterisation. Now the belletristic charm (as it may be

termed) of Homer is certainly not to be neglected; we may well agree that the poet is not the poet unless he not merely employs but is enraptured with the beautiful form. Still when this form has given us its highest, and our poetic intoxication has sobered down toward reason, we begin to ask what was it all about anyhow? Practically the usual answer runs sneering: only an old border-feud between two half civilized little peoples far off yonder in Turkey. Thus the *What* is contemptible, but the *How* is the world's poetic miracle.

Now this complete diversity or rather abyss between the poet's theme and his achievement, or in general between poetic form and content, the present essay of ours is going to counter as best it can, deeming the same an absurdity or indeed an impossibility. Matthew Arnold has written what is probably the best known and most highly prized dissertation on the ancient Greek poet in our language. And yet he, the literary exquisite, never intimates, indeed it seems not to enter his head to tell us, what is the real matter at issue which produced the conflict, whose explosion quite 3000 years ago called forth such an unparalleled and enduring outburst of poetry, with mountains of commentary following down the ages ever since. To be sure, Arnold claims that he is merely giving some advice "On translating Homer" into English, still he branches off and dilates upon what may be specially called the literary aspect of the poet, which excursions constitute the chief value of his treatise

for most readers. And yet the striking fact remains that he does not even think of dropping us a sentence about the genetic content or idea of the greatest poetry in the world, whose worth he is celebrating.

But there looms up before us to-day far more than ever in the past, the historic purport of the Homeric poems. Indeed it may be said that to see aright their place in the World's Literature, we at present must get some conception of their place in the World's History, even if their special events be mainly mythical. For Mythology and History, no longer opposed as hitherto, have now come together with mutual co-operant harmony in Homer.

Here we may touch upon a point which is to be elaborated more fully later on: the universal purport of the poems of Homer is historical, yea world-historical, but their particular occurrences are or may be in the main mythical; fabulous may be their outer incidents, but their inner creative substance is the enduring reality of all Time. Mythology and History in Homer are not enemies, as so many of his expositors think, but both have their place in his work and contribute to his total achievement.

I.

THE OLD TROJAN WAR.

Ten years it lasted, that old Trojan War, as the story runs, which also adds ten years for the preparation, and ten years for the return of the victors.

Thus three general stages of it are suggested, of which Homer may be said to record only the second and third, with not a few incidental allusions to the first stage strown along the pathway of his narrative. But why did he not compose a separate poem on this first stage, telling us how the great war came about, and thus constructing at the start a grand epical trilogy? The heroic singer, however, springs into the immediate action (*in medias res*); he has left it to the later bardlings, most of whom have perished, to trick out his massive central achievement with the already much-frayed fringes of the so-called Epic Cycle.

Undoubtedly that ancient contention on the plain of Troy seems insignificant at the first look. In fact the compass of the whole Trojan War was very limited, being confined to a few tribes and small nations scattered around the Egean on both sides, European and Asiatic. Yet it was the prophetic germ of the new order then arising, verily of the new world-consciousness. More than any other event it heralds the birth of Europe, and evokes its first, and still, from some highest viewpoints, its most beautiful literary expression.

The conflict between the two forces now starting definitely to grapple with each other for untold ages throughout the planet, concentrated itself primordially in the Trojan plain, upon which rose up imperious the citadel of Troy dominating the coast-line up and down the Egean, as we may see by the number and localities of Troy's auxiliaries.

Now to capture that ever-threatening citadel was the objective point of the Greek army, we may say, of the Greek soul.

On the other hand this Greek army, which had sailed across the dividing sea, built a counter fortress, having drawn up their ships along the Trojan shore, and protected them seemingly by a sort of temporary earth-work with ditch and gates. For these vessels had to be preserved as a means for carrying their combatants back to Europe, when the great deed was finished. Such, then, were the two fortified strongholds frowning at and defiant of each other, as they lay only a few miles apart (variously reported at from three to seven miles). The one we may designate as the ship-wall, already vanished in Homer's time (as he declares), and the other as the city-wall, built of stone and hence still existent to-day though in ruins, which have recently been uncovered to new universal fame. It should be added that the ship-wall had two lines not far apart—one being composed of the sterns of the vessels drawn ashore at the water's edge, the other being thrown up as an earth-work some rods further landward.

Now between these two ramparts facing each other with hostile challenge lay Troy's famous plain—the arena which had the unique destiny of beholding the race's typical characters unfold themselves in deed and in word, and on which the World's History, at least of our European stock, had its first embryonic birth-struggle. Hence it

has become a most significant landmark of time, and to this day the Trojan conflict is the most worthily and eternally told of all the supreme crises of the ages. For its voice to and through futurity has been, is, and will continue to be, Greek Homer.

Startling possibly, and to some readers certainly extravagant, will appear the assertion that the ever-recurring series of individual duels on Troy's plain constitute a World-War, and not a long-drawn line of prize-fights. What then constitutes a World-War? Not the manner of the combat or the implements employed, not the numbers engaged or the extent of space over which the battle rages: on the contrary, it is the eternal principle at stake, it is the immortal value of the deed, however confined its territory. Now let it be in confirmation asserted again that the Trojan War is going on to-day within essentially the same boundaries it had thirty centuries ago, having essentially the same stake as then, with essentially the same antagonists, the Greek still on this side and the Oriental still on the other.

We hope our alert reader has felt prompted to demand: point out to us the passage in Homer where he says that he sings of the conflict between Orient and Occident. Let it be acknowledged from the start that no such direct statement is to be found in his poems. He and his age were not yet conscious of the vast future significance of their deed. In fact, time has been evolving its meaning ever since then, and is not done yet with it by any

means. But that which Homer the poet purposely and knowingly takes as his theme is the personal career of the two Heroes, Achilles and Ulysses. He first seizes and sets forth the individual man in the grand human discipline and development. Hence he sings an Achillead (called the *Iliad*), and an Ulyssead (called the *Odyssey*), each of them being the record of a great personal experience, whose frame-work is the Trojan War. Indeed the Greek Muse, whom he invokes, could only inspire him with the song of individuality, for just that is what Greece signifies to civilisation and to herself.

Still those two heroic individuals, Achilles and Ulysses, made eternal by the poet, have their deeper even if unconscious being in that Trojan time and its conflict. The underlying pre-supposition of both of Homer's poems, and the genetic substrate of all his characters, must be sought in the spiritual collision between the two opposite sides of the Egean, between the Asiatic and Greek. To be sure, this collision has not yet pushed up to the surface, though ever-present underneath and active germinally; it has not yet become historic and conscious, as we find it in the next great Greek book after Homer, namely the *History* of Herodotus, whose proclaimed theme is just the war between Hellas and the Orient, as represented by the Persian.

Let it first be grasped, then, that this conflict between Greeks and Trojans has arisen in one and the same stock or folk, namely the Hellenic. That

is, the Greeks and the Trojans are two branches of the one Hellenic people. They talk the same language, have the same customs, worship the same Gods. Homer himself intimates, to be sure mythically, their common origin. It would seem that an early offshoot of the Hellenic race divided from the main branch somewhere in Northern Greece, crossed the Egean to Asia, and there settled in the Troad, where they built Troy. Such is the earliest legendary glimmer of the separation of the Hellenes (so they still to-day call themselves in their totality) into their two opposing tendencies, the one turning eastward, the other keeping westward. In the course of generations this spatial separation becomes spiritual, with fierce struggle for the mastery of the future Hellenic heritage. Hence we may characterize the two antagonistic sides, though of one blood, thus: The Greeks are Hellenes with face turned toward the West and Europe, the Trojans are Hellenes with face turned toward the East and Asia.

The main point now to be emphasized is that the conflict between Orient and Occident, which will hereafter expand to such enormous proportions, and will keep on expanding till to-day it quite embraces the whole earth, is as yet only very local and germinal in Homer. Still it is yeasting through all his writ, even if the poet is hardly aware of what is working most deeply in himself. So it comes that he has spoken the truly creative word, which also unfolds more deeply its meaning along with the ages.

The next question which naturally comes up in this connection, inquires: How does Homer express the cause or ground of the aforesaid conflict? Not in abstract terms, but in concrete, imaginative form; he individualizes it after his wont, representing it in and through a person, yea a woman. Here enters the story of Greek Helen, whose abduction by Trojan Paris, not only starts but keeps up the war of the Greeks for her restoration. What has that to do with the conflict between Orient and Occident? So much we can say now with the poet: an Oriental Prince has come to Greece, has taken away the most beautiful Greek woman from family and country (thus defying Greek social institutions) and refuses to give her up on demand, in which refusal he is supported by his own city of Troy and its ruler Priam, and finally by Troy's allied peoples, Oriental or Orientalizing.

From Homer's time to this day there has been one long struggle to find and to express the meaning of Helen. She has begotten thousands of poems in every style, thousands of essays and prelections of all sorts—a vast literature ranging from sympathetic admiration to bitterest invective. Rather the most prolific woman that ever existed, she may be acclaimed, excepting mother Eve. Wonderful too has been her metamorphosis down time; she seems to have the power of taking a new shape for every succeeding age. Only yesterday I read the verse of a living Romaic bard, who sang that the Greeks again were launching their ships in a new

expedition across the Egean to Troy for the restoration of their stolen Helen—still a captive of the Oriental man, not now the Trojan, or the Persian, or the Arabian, but the Turk, last bulwark of her barbarous abduction.

But turning back from this latest epiphany of Helen to her first appearance in the affair of Troy, we continue eagerly to interrogate: What does she stand for to those earliest Greeks, and to their and her singer, Homer? That she represents something deep within their mind and heart, aye the very deepest, is indicated by the long yet persistent labors and sacrifices which they undergo for her sake. We have to think her their principle, their essence, however we may formulate it; her soul must be their soul, and her story their story in its completed round of ravishment, exile, and restoration. The fight for her possession is the fight of the Greeks for their distinctive existence, for the Hellenic spirit we may say. Indeed the affair goes much deeper, as we now can see who look back over the tract of the centuries. It is hence the contest for the future inheritance of the race's culture, inasmuch as the problem therein propounded may be taken to run thus: Which of these two contestants, Greek or Asiatic, is to be the bearer of civilisation to that new European world now being born? The Greek claimed it and won it both in legend and history, valiantly asserting his ancient leadership both at Troy and Marathon.

The Trojans, then, belonged to the Hellenic race,

in which the aforesaid primal bifurcation was taking place eastward and westward. One of the most significant facts about Troy is that within the city itself there existed the two parties, whom we may call the Orientalizers and the Hellenizers. It is generally recognized that a cardinal test of the difference between the Asiatic and the European civilizations lies in their different attitude toward man's basic institution, the Family with its heart, the woman. The Orient was and still is polygamous, Europe monogamous. Of this fundamental social diversity in the World's History, which brought with its rise a long epochal conflict, Hellas was the early protagonist. And the story of Helen has in it a decided strain of monogamy, since she, the wife of the one and herself the one only, is to be restored to her Greek husband by a ten years' war if need be, out of her hapless estrangement in Troy, whose ruler is portrayed by the poet as a colossal polygamist, though not quite equal in this respect to Solomon, our biblical exemplar of wisdom and polygamy. Priam had fifty sons, according to the Homeric tally, when the Greeks arrived before his city walls; his chief wife Hecuba had borne him nineteen, so that thirty one must be assigned to other women. In addition to these sons, the poet gives him a relatively small output of twelve daughters with their husbands. It is true that Homer does not mention so directly any other polygamist in Troy except Priam; but is not this one case of the ruler emphatic enough to show the dominant trend?

Some too good commentators have held that Priam was the only one of his sort in the city, and the grand exception there; rather should we infer that the poet took the sovereign as the most telling incarnation and significant symbol of the prevalent practice and spirit of his people.

Still just in that same city of Troy, and also in that same household of the king, we hear the clashing protest. Hector, Priam's best and bravest son, urges the restoration of Helen, in whose abduction lay the original sin against monogamy which caused the war, and which will, as he foretells with prophetic fervor, bring about Troy's downfall. But the other side, that of Paris, being upheld by his father the monarch, and by some secret bribery it seems, is too strong for even heroic Hector, though he has the support of his brother Antenor in vindicating the same view. Moreover the relation between Hector and his spouse Andromache shows the purest domestic devotion between the one man and the one wife, and cannot be conceived as tainted with his own father's polygamy. Hence we have to say that Hector, in his deepest conviction, represents the Greek world inside of Troy, and thus fights for a cause in which he does not believe—and just that is his tragedy, his world-historical fate, in spite of his personal nobility of character.

But our main point at present is the fact that the original dualism between Orient and Occident now starts within the Hellenic race itself, and is to fight

out its earliest recorded round on the plain of Troy, very circumscribed and indeed embryonic when compared to that same now mightily developed conflict, which belts more than half the globe to-day. Thus ancient Priam recalls the modern Turk with his harem and its diversified offspring. Also the political order of Troy has its similarity to the Oriental absolutism; Priam is the paternalistic autocrat as ruler, not unlike the Sultan. But to these domestic and political differences is in our time added a new and intenser antagonism, the religious. The old Greeks and Trojans had no fight over any diversity of God-consciousness; both sides had the same Olympian system, though its divinities might and did divide among themselves concerning the fate of Troy. That is, the primordial dualism of the Hellenic race had entered Olympus itself, and cleft it into two opposing parties of Gods, who will battle with each other above, as do the Greeks and Trojans below at Troy. Thus the grand Hellenic bifurcation sunders their one religion for a time into warring halves, whose opposition we shall find penetrating for a time even their supreme God, Zeus Himself.

But at present the religious element has become paramount in the furious fanatical, sanguinary strife between two world-faiths, the Christian now specially represented by the Greek, and the Mahomedan now specially represented by the Turk. Still along with these two Faiths and their respective protagonists are involved many other

Faiths and Unfaiths of every sort ; for instance all multi-religious and multi-racial India is seething, and as Pan-Asiatic seems just now to be uniting and arraying itself upon the old Trojan battle-line against the Greeks and Europe. Moreover alongside and often underneath the religious question is violently fermenting the political protest, which is proclaiming to the Occident: "Hands off from the government of our Orient." And into this political opposition has become intergrown the loud economic dissent which now is crying out: "No more of your Europe-made fabrics—up with our old national industries!" And the hostility extends to a reaction against Western education which has been subtly inoculating the countries of the East. Thus the three great secular institutions of man in their Occidental form, the political, the economic, and the educative, are to be expelled from the Orient in the grand revival of its new religious spirit. For the creative genius of the Orient has been and probably still is religious; all the great world-religions of to-day arose and developed in Asia; our own Christian religion, we must not forget, is Asiatic in its origin and in its early expansion and organisation, and has its strong Oriental reactions to-day, even in our America.

But let us return from these far-away glimpses of the Trojan War's present expansion to its minute original starting-point, little Troy with its supreme singer Homer. Often enough have we said that his ultimate theme lay in the conflict between

Orient and Occident, just opening on the Trojan plain and as yet limited to the one Hellenic stock. Thus that primordial Trojan War was really a kind of Civil War, the incipient struggle of the whole Hellenic folk within itself to settle its future destiny, namely the coming civilisation of Europe.

Also we have laid down the proposition more than once that the old conflict of Troy is going on to-day, has indeed started up quite recently with a fresh energy of blood-letting and rancour. Whereof a brief survey would seem to be in place for the more complete comprehension of our poet.

II.

TO-DAY'S TROJAN WAR.

The best explication of Homer in his truly universal sense is the present struggle between Greek and Turk along the western coast of Asia Minor. The arena is still the same territory as formerly, being at and around Troy; the principle fought about persists in general the same, Orient versus Occident; the Greek military campaign from European Hellas across the Egean to meet the foe is quite the same now as then in direction and in spirit. Internally and universally it is the same war as sung by Homer; externally and in particulars it is very different. Gunpowder, electricity, the steam-car have taken the place of the horse-

chariot, the speer-hurler, and the archer; but the original elemental First Cause of the strife continues the same, though expanded from atomic into continental proportions. To use a Platonic expression, colossal in magnitude and in mutation has been the Appearance, but the creative Idea indwelling it has not changed, but seems just now more furiously active in combativeness and more unreconciled in temper than ever before. Indeed the reconciliation of Orient and Occident remains the future largest, most desperate task of the World's History. Homer, when truly heard, first struck its key-note.

But our present object is to take cognizance of to-day's Trojan War, as we shall call it passingly, for the purpose of stressing our analogy. In recent Greek newspapers we find it named the modern Ten Year's War, as it has lasted practically from the Balkan outbreak (1912) till now (1922). In such wise the Greek mind still couples the two great events of its history—the overture and the finale some thirty centuries apart—and thus still acts and thinks in the framework built by old Homer. So we shall proceed also.

In 1917 Greece changed from her neutral, if not secretly hostile, attitude toward the Allies, and entered the World-War through Venizelos, her greatest statesman since Pericles, who may be acclaimed the hero of the modern conflict of Hellas with her Oriental foe, now the Turk. But in order to accomplish his supreme national end, which was

to rescue and to unite the whole dispersed Hellenic family, he had to oust the antagonistic titular king of Greece, Constantine, who was not a Greek by birth or education, being born of a Danish father and a Russian mother, and being educated as a German soldier in his higher training. Moreover he was married to a German Princess, who did not forget her brother, the Kaiser, and Berlin, when she was installed in her Greek palace at Athens. But is it not strange? For now we see again in the Grecian camp the hero and the king, or ability and authority, clashing in bitter strife and opposition, re-enacting Achilles and Agamemnon in the fateful quarrel of the First Book of the *Iliad*. But the result in the present case was that the hero overmatched the king, who had to flee from Hellas, and betake himself along with his queen as an exile to Switzerland.

The next year (1918) saw the end of the World-War, the success of the Allies, and the triumph of Venizelos, the Greek hero as statesman. The Turks, who had sided with Germany, were completely broken in spirit, their army captured, their weapons taken from them, their capital Constantinople given over to their enemies. Venizelos seized the supreme opportunity for restoring to freedom and unifying his much-scattered Hellenic people. He claimed on national grounds, and received from the friendly Allies, what was practically the Greek world in Europe and in Asia, though he renounced Constantinople, the grand goal of all Hellenic as-

piration, for the implied promise of its possession in the future.

But that which specially concerns the student of Homer in these proceedings is that during the following year (1919), Venizelos secures the grand prize of his statesmanship from the victorious Allies, namely a mandate which means his possession of all the Greek countries under Turkish rule. Now the culminating deed of these manifold transactions was the advance over the Egean, and the occupation of Smyrna by the Greeks and the Allies in May 1919, under the direction of Venizelos. Our Homeric heart ought here to thrill with new interest, since Smyrna is more intimately connected and indeed intergrown with Homer's life and work than any other spot of Greek territory. It may be said to keep watch over Troy, it stands on the old battle-line against the Orient; it probably saw the birth and composition of the poet's *Iliad*.

Such was the primal grand action of to-day's Trojan War (as we shall at present designate it for the striking analogy) repeating in marvelous outline the ancient expedition which set out from Aulis for the Anatolian shore, with the purpose of suppressing that recreant Troy which was Orientalizing, and thus had become faithless to the grand Hellenic destiny of the future. So this last expedition turns in the same direction to face the same foe as of old, being animated with the same ultimate purpose. Moreover it should be added that the people of these two Greek expeditions, so many

milleniums apart, spoke the same Greek speech and might have tolerably understood one another's vocables, in spite of the emphatic dialectal differences, whereof Homer himself furnishes still the striking example—his epic tongue being a composite of several dialects. So much, however, we looking far back can now affirm: that antique Hellenic folk, with and through their poet, has evolved the most immortal language which has yet appeared on our planet.

But suddenly starts to fall the heavy counter-stroke of fate upon the hitherto smiling fortune of Venizelos. The Christian Greeks, drunk with their victory, begin to murder, in the wantonness of new-won power, the innocent inhabitants of the Mohammedan faith, and thus they rouse a religious vengeance, the most venomous kind of vengeance, not only throughout all Asia Minor, but likewise hither Asia including Egypt and India. The immediate result was that a hero arose on the Turkish side and sprang to the front in defence of his people and religion. It is not too much to say that Mustapha Kemal Pasha has become the Hector of this last Trojan War, in spite of many differences between the old and the new leader. Still Venizelos completed his diplomatic triumph by the Treaty of Sevres (April 1920) in which the Allies confirmed practically all his winnings from the Turks, and thus he placed himself on the pinnacle of statesmanship not only of Greece but of Europe.

In a few months, however, dropped the sudden

thunderbolt, which shook the world—the *Fall of Venizelos*. It came through the act of his own Greek people, who by vote drove their greatest hero into exile and recalled king Constantine, the monarch who in recent years had been such a persistent obstacle to their cause, even if formerly in the Balkans he had helped fight their battles. But let us mark again the Homeric aspect of the situation: the hero, unappreciated and dishonored, retires from his country's service, whereby the enemy conquer. For the Turks just at present seem in a fair way to recover all that Venizelos won for his Greeks, even to regain Homer's Smyrna, not far from which they are now drawn up in battle array. For at the present moment any reconciliation between hero and king appears unlikely. So we see the situation described in the *Iliad*: the Greeks enter the battle without their hero, though with their king, while the Trojans (the Turks) are in the full flush of their victory, being led by their valiant Hector. Thus to-day's Trojan War has reached about the same situation which we find in the middle of the old *Iliad*, with the future looking gloomy enough for the Greeks.

Why did the Greek people reject their hero Venizelos, tumbling him down from the top of his consummate success in their cause? One reason assigned is that they were tired of war; yet Constantine, the professional soldier, made them fight more than ever, and they have been fighting ever since. Another ground has been strongly affirmed

by observers on the spot: the Greek people were actually envious of the unbroken fortune and of the dominating European influence of their illustrious Statesman, who had united and restored their nationality. To our astonishment afresh the ancient parallel will spring up before us: Venizelos has had to suffer from his people the same fate which befell the old Athenian Themistocles, whose genius it chiefly was which won the first Persian war and freed historical Greece and Europe from the rule of the Orient.

Thus it seems that the modern Greeks are afflicted with the same fatal jealousy which the ancient Greeks so often manifested toward their Great Man, banishing him from the state which he had served and saved, by a popular vote known as the ostracism. Their own best writers, for instance Plato and Plutarch, have reproached them for their envy (*phthonos*), and denounced it to be of all human qualities the most ungodlike. At any rate the blow which felled Venizelos, struck by his own people, resounded all around the world and came back like a boomerang, compelling everywhere the question: is such a nation worth saving? The Greeks are already feeling the backstroke of their own deed, as long ago set forth in antique tragedy, and also in Homer, and they probably have still more to suffer.

Such is, in some far-off flashes, what we may call the newest interpretation of the old poet, as now published by Time itself, which thus unfolds not

only Homer's enduring, but also his ever-widening truth. For it is this eternal truth which we wish to get at in the poet, and in literature, and in everything else. So we seek to conceive to-day's Trojan War, which is still being fought as of old in the same locality and for the same stake, with remarkable co-incidences even in the particular events of these two Trojan Wars, the first and the last.

Indeed it would seem as if we might point out in the ancient record the very stage at which the modern combatants have arrived. In the Twelfth Book of the Iliad, Hector at the head of his victorious Trojans breaks down the gate of the wall and rushes through the aperture, thus getting inside the Greek fortification and pushing ahead to set fire to the ships, which lie not far off drawn up along the coast line. In some such position Kemal (the Turkish Hector) appears to be triumphing at the present moment, having broken through what seems the outer Greek battle-line. This Twelfth Book is the middle one of the Iliad, and is the center of that long desperate combat which rages through nearly nine Books at the heart of the poem. But according to the last account yester eve, Kemal (Hector) had not yet reached "with consuming fire the ship of Protesilaus", but was driving forward on the way thither. To-morrow we may hear of his arrival and his deed. Such, in general, is to-day's situation of the modern Trojan War at and around Smyrna, as if foregleamed from old Troy's silent down-looking citadel. The hero Venizelos (Achil-

les) is absent in his foreign tent somewhere, missing at the very crisis of his country's destiny, not however through his own will but through the deed of the Greek people themselves.

III.

HOMERIC BACKGROUNDS.

Having thus sought to indicate that Homer with his Trojan theme has his unique place in Universal History, we shall next try to catch, from passing allusions in his poems, some of the historic presuppositions of his work. For he had to have certain foregone backgrounds of tradition, out of which his genius sprang, and which he wrought over into his present productions. Ever the poet holds seething within himself the whole past of his people, whose supreme travail is to unfold into him and his highest achievement.

Now on close inspection we find in Homer's book three successive layers of the Hellenic folk following in time one another at considerable intervals. Really they indicate three consecutive invasions of different branches or tribes of the Greek race, each of which after a period of possession, is conquered and supplanted serially till the remaining last one of the line.

The Homeric scene of such invasions lay in the Greek Peninsula, their direction was from Northern Greece (say Thessaly) to Southern (say the Peloponnesus), while culturally the movement

started from the more savage and drove against the more civilized members of the same stock. That is, Homer seems to be aware that thrice before his own time the barbarians of the North had swept down upon the civilisation of the South, had conquered it and taken its place. Thus he in his little Greek corner had seen, as it were embryonically, what all Europe later beheld full-fledged for more than a thousand years, what indeed appears to be lowering over it just now.

The names of these three sets of invaders may be given in the following order: the Pelasgian, the Achæan, the Doric. Of course our learned expositors have disputed much about these designations; but the words are all given by Homer himself, and even their special meaning may be fairly inferred from what he says, though he is not always uniform in his usage. Taking the more familiar term, we shall call them the Irruptions of the Northern Barbarians, confining them of course to the Greek Peninsula and its peoples as known to Homer.

I. The Pelasgian Irruption, the oldest known to Homer, descended from the North and impinged in Southern Greece upon an antecedent civilisation, which was pre-Hellenic and probably pre-Aryan. It pertained to that long-agone aforetime which has been uncovered in recent years by the numerous excavations in Greece and in Asia Minor. A vast pre-historic material has been unearthed and set up in museums, but its message as a whole has

hardly yet been deciphered, certainly not settled historically and organized. On the whole the spade has as yet dug up more problems than solutions, which fact, however, should favor its continuance. But the question still stays whether Schliemann's discoveries at Mycenae and Troy confirm or deny Homer. Somewhat of both is probably a fair resultant of the two contradictories, Yes and No. Still the general proposition that the early Hellenic Pelasgians debouched from the North and overwhelmed an older civilisation in the South may be accepted as valid, since that is just what History has been repeating ever since, not only in Greece but along the whole Mediterranean from the Egean to the Atlantic.

Now Homer knows a good deal about the Pelasgians, though after a scattered fashion. They were already in his day a submerged folk which still showed life underneath the dominating race, namely the Achæan, and which would push up to the surface in certain localities far apart. For instance, Homer mentions the Pelasgic element in Northern Greece (Thessaly), in Southern Greece (Peloponnesus), in Asia Minor and even in the island of Crete. All this indicates the original wide dispersion of the Pelasgians over the whole Hellenic territory, quite as we bound it to-day.

Who were these primitive Pelasgians, of what race? Very significant is the fact that the supreme God of the Greeks, Zeus, is called Pelasgic by the old poet. And the Greek hero, Achilles, before

Troy still prays: "O King Zeus, the Dodonaean, the Pelasgian, fulfil for me this my supplication" (Illiad XVI, 233). Hence we infer that the Pelasgic stock was the early Hellenic, having the same Gods and sanctuaries and sacred rites. Moreover Homer in the Catalogue (Iliad, Book II) designates the Thessalian domain of Achilles by the name of Pelasgic Argos, suggesting probably the primal locality where the rising Argives (or Achaeans) first met and put down the declining Pelasgians.

Significant is the fact that a remnant of this primordial Greek stock still survived in Asia Minor, and naturally took sides with Troy in the war against their old enemies, the Argives (or Achaeans). And these "divine Pelasgians", as Homer titles them, long outlasted the throes of the Trojan conflict, for we find them mentioned at least ten times by Herodotus in his History, who dates himself some four centuries after Homer. A part of them were also drawn into the Persian War of Xerxes against the continental Greeks (an echo of the old Trojan fight), which war they must have outlived, in order to have come under the eye of Herodotus, who adjudged them Barbarians, because he did not understand their dialect. Still he connects them closely with the Ionic tribe, even with the Athenians, showing herein seemingly a touch of his Doric prejudice, which fails him not elsewhere, but which is unknown to Homer.

During this Pelasgian era which lasted several centuries, the eventful primal migration took place

from Northern Hellas across the sea to the Troad. Thus arose the later Trojans, originally from the early Hellenic stock, and preserving in common their Greek speech, manners, religion, and folklore. For Homeric Troy held essentially an Hellenic population, though inoculated with an Asiatic tendency. Repeatedly does the poet give the Trojan lineage from Dardanus, the son of Zeus the Olympian, whose posterity were called the Dardanids and also the Trojans, and who transferred even Olympus to a mountain in the Troad. Thus came about the original split of the Hellenic race into its two primal branches, the European and the Oriental, with their two opposite trends leading finally to the Trojan War, which (we deem it our part to repeat at every turn) is still holding out in the same general locality, so that to-day we witness practically the old conflict between Greece and Troy.

To the Pelasgians have been attributed the massive stone-walls of Tiryns and Mycenae, and other such gigantic monuments of the Hellenic aforetime. The spade has likewise uncovered many smaller items of the supposed Pelasgic civilisation, which unfolded itself for some centuries. But one fact is certain: down upon this primitive Greek people with its culture swoops another hardier but less civilized Greek tribe from the North, which takes its victim's place, and is to go through a similar round of rise, culmination and decadence.

II. The Achaean Irruption, also bursting out of

the barbarous North and pouring down upon the more civilized but enervated South, is the second of these early migratory movements in the Greek Peninsula. It unfolded its own civilisation, doubtless in conjunction with the preceding Pelasgic, and it too must have lasted some centuries, let us say three. But its greatest achievement is that it evolved somewhere toward its close or possibly a little afterwards the poet Homer, who has celebrated its people and their exploits and their heroes, with such creative power that they live for us to-day.

Again we find that the poet locates the original Achaea in the North, in the Thessalian region overlooked by Olympus and its divine dwellers, whence flows the first fountain of Hellenism. Thence it passes to the Peloponnesus, to Argos and to Mesene and even to Ithaca, till it becomes in Homeric usage a collective appellation of all the Greeks. Indeed both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* employ the compound word *Panachaeian* to stress the total host of the Greeks. This all-uniting term for much divided Hellas we shall find occasion to use after the example of Homer.

The bloom of the present Achaean period was doubtless the age of wide-ruling Agamemnon, with his realm centering in golden Mycenae. At the same time we catch the traces of a cultural rift between the North and South as separated by the Corinthian Gulf—between the richer, more advanced and more united Southern Achaea, (Pelo-

ponnesus) and the poorer, more backward, and more disjoined Northern Achaea (Thessaly). Thus in the course of centuries there had grown to be two Achaeas not a little differing in civilisation, but contrasted specially in the power of associating their dispersed communities. That later Greek political ideal known as *autonomy*, seems to have germinated in this Olympian region, home of the Greek Gods. It is likely that the individual was more subdued to authority and so less self-assertive in the South than in the North. Such inferences we draw from Homer's own account in the Iliad most strikingly emphasized in its First Book, where he opens his poem with the deep bitter scission between the Northern hero Achilles and the Southern leader Agamemnon. This was not a mere personal quarrel between two men, but underneath it seethed a grand dissonance and disunion between the two Greek sections, which had first to be healed before Troy could be taken. And it had been of long growth and persistence, not a sudden spirit of individual wrath. Hence results the decree of Zeus, the overruling Greek Providence, that such an inner rift must be reconciled ere Hellas can be victorious in her outer and vaster conflict with the Asiatic at Troy.

This brings us to the superlative, verily the world-historical deed done by this Achaean era: the combination of quite all European Greece against the Oriental tendency of the Trojan city and of its considerable body of subjects and allies

in Asia Minor and Thrace. To associate the many scattered and indeed centrifugal members of the Hellenic name into a common expedition against the distant enemy of their destiny across the Egean, was a colossal feat, considering the time, the people, and the obstacles. For the Greek, both mythically and historically, was by nature dissociative, psychically separative, particularly in his political character; the Greek world finally went to pieces, and fell under a foreign yoke through its refusal to affiliate within itself; each little community would stay autonomous, and be itself alone and for itself alone. Strangely this early Achæan period overcame for a time such inborn spirit of disunion, the deepest native trait of Hellas. Even more difficult seems the task of uniting the larger opposite sections, Northern and Southern Achæa, under one headship and one great common cause. This work seems to be attributed mainly to the embassy of Nestor and Ulysses in the poem, the two wisest Southerners, whose mission to Phthia before the Trojan War secured the North to the Greek cause, and gained for it the Greek hero Achilles.

Hence we may well suppose that the grand world-historical consciousness of the conflict between East and West, Asia and Greece, Orient and Europe, began to dawn in that twilit Achæan period, and to take its first decided shape during the war between Troy and Greece, though we can discern fitful premonitions of it in the still earlier Mythus, for instance in the pre-Trojan sieges of Thebes.

Such is, then, the underlying world-consciousness uttered first by Homer beneath his mythical mask in a small corner of small Europe, but now resounding often in furious battle-shouts round the globe—modern echoes we may deem them, of that Greek war-cry heard long ago before the towers of Troy.

But amid all this chaos of hate and bloodshed, let us not forget that Homer sings likewise of reconciliation, both between the clashing Greek individuals Achilles and Agamemnon, and the clashing Greek sections Northern and Southern, and between the clashing Hellenic nations, Trojan and Greek. Indeed the deepest, the truly eternal significance of the *Iliad*, as well as the ultimate ground of its poetical unity, lies in its movement from a double enmity to a double placation. The first peace of the poem that between Achaea's hero and Achaea's leader, we may call the Pan-Achaean concord; but the second and larger harmony, even if only a temporary truce, is that between the two contending peoples, the Trojan and the Greek, as nobly attuned by the poet in the last Book of his *Iliad*. We call this final and highest concord the Pan-Hellenic ideal, since the two chief and earliest contending offshoots of the one Hellenic stock are now reconciled, and recognize their common humanity, at least for the moment, during which happy, warless, concordant interval the poet brings his poem, the *Iliad*, to its close.

• But we are not to forget that this Achaean time,

with its heroes and rulers and its one great event, form the setting of Homer's poetry. The poet looks back at it from his own later degenerate age (so he declares); and celebrates and doubtless idealizes its glories. Indeed we may well conceive that what exhausted the Achæan civilisation and its people, and led to their decline and submergence, was their one supremely Great Deed sapping all their strength and wealth, namely the Trojan War over the sea. A like decadence and atrophy of to-day's Greece from the same cause seem to be on the way just now.

But Homer lived, according to his own repeated intimations, in the succeeding period, amid the next grand Irruption of barbarism from the North, probably at its earlier stage. Such real environment of the poet is now to be glanced at.

III. The Doric Irruption follows the Achæan period, overwhelming the latter's sovereignty and civilisation, especially in the Peloponnesus. Again a ruder but hardier Hellenic tribe from the Thesalian North streams down into the more cultivated but weaker South, and takes possession of the same, and stays there during the entire illustrious era of Greek History, in which it played a famous part. For the chief branch of the Dorians were the historic Spartans (unknown to Homer), who always celebrated as their original home little Doris nestled in the mountainous region of Thessaly, and retained their rugged adamantine character in the South through many trials. Homer's Achæans quite dis-

appear from their former seats of glory in the Peloponnesus, being driven into one narrow strip along the Southern coast of the Corinthian Gulf, where they emerge in the last stage of Greek independence, and win a small shred of their old Homeric fame by forming and valiantly maintaining for years the Achaean League. There is little doubt that the men and money of ancient Achaea in the South were drained off by the long and exhaustive Trojan War, whereby the country fell an easy prey to the barbarous, but elemental and unspoiled hordes of the Doric North.

Now during this changeful tumultuous time of transition from one to the other of these two civilisations, which unsettled all Hellas, and especially started the Greek migration to Asia Minor, Homer is generally supposed to have lived, and to have experienced therein the age's upheaval, against which he shows more than one sign of reaction. He too migrated from his early Hellenic homeland, whose mountainous scenery nevertheless he has vividly impressed upon the sublimer parts of his first poem. To be sure he as poet will not directly speak of the present Doric reality, ugly and savage, according to him, but he looks back upon and caresses the vanished ideal world of Achaean heroism, and its supreme deed done at Troy. Some such mighty soul-forming experience of an epoch's overturn and convulsion underlies his work, and often imparts to it the elemental forthrightness of Nature's own stroke, when she gets angry. He lived his time's

earthquake and responsively his own too, with which he at his volcanic moments shakes us to a shudder in the *Iliad*. But he also won his spirit's serenity and recovery, of which the theme attunes his later *Odyssey*.

Such are the three barbarous Irruptions from the North, each of which destroyed an old pre-existent civilisation, but at the same time laid the basis for a new cultural development. These great social changes lie imbedded in Homer, and form the pre-supposition and foundation of his whole poetic fabric. They are not attested by direct historic record, though the Doric migration makes its passage into accepted Greek History, which assigns to it a fixed date (1104, B. C. or eighty years after the capture of Troy, according to the old Greek chronologer Eratosthenes, who calls this Doric migration the return of the Heracleids).

IV. The complete appreciation of Homer requires that we look not only at what happened before and during his unhistoric time, but also that we take into our vision what occurred after him along the lines of his achievement. For later history, whose germs he often descries and describes in his mythical manner, becomes his best interpreter, since it gives as realized what he beheld more or less in embryo.

Accordingly it illuminates the poet to take note of the fourth grand Irruption, the Macedonian, of a less civilized but fresh and vigorous Hellenic offshoot, which also marched down from the Olympian

North and subjugated all Southern Greece during the exactly documented historic age. That is, the next overwhelming Invasion that took place within the Greek Peninsula, was that of Macedon, which was headed by her kings Philip and Alexander, and which occurred hundreds of years after the last Doric Invasion with its many displacements and migrations. The wonderful Greek civilisation, which has shaped the secular culture of the European world since its time, budded, bloomed, and declined during the period which lies between these two Irruptions, the Dorian and the Macedonian, both of which, though historical, repeated in essence the two previous mythical Irruptions of the dim aforetime, the Achæan and the Pelasgic. These likewise we glimpse in the pages of Homer, who thus appears to have seen and in his way outlined the original norm of all such successive Invasions, both mythical and historical.

It is well known that the Macedonian monarch, Alexander the Great, was an enthusiastic student and appreciator of Homer, whose Mythus of Troy the Greek soldier would realize by taking not merely one little Asiatic town, but by conquering and Hellenizing Asia itself. So we have the right to think that the very germinal conflict on the plains of Troy depicted by the poet, finds its supreme Hellenic fulfilment in the Macedonian conquest of the Orient.

Thus Alexander, uniting in one mighty dominant personality the hero and the leader, the Achilles

and the Agamemnon of the Iliad, which he so deeply assimilated, makes actual the Homeric ideal of a Hellas triumphant over the East, and gives to what seems a petty local conflict an universal significance. Still the Macedonian Irruption with its conquest remains Hellenic, while imparting to the Orient the civilisation won in Greece. But this national or racial limit is now to be transcended in the outreaching evolution of History; the Northern Irruption breaks in from outside of the Greek Peninsula, and becomes non-Hellenic, indeed European. Still it derives from Homer, whom we now see becoming supra-national in his larger significance.

V. The next Irruption of the primitive untamed Barbarians of the North upon the civilized South was the mightiest, the most extended in space and the most prolonged in time, being known in History as the Teutonic migration of Northern peoples. Not merely Northern Greece but Northern Europe precipitated itself against the entire Mediterranean civilisation, from the Egean to the Atlantic, embracing the three Southern Peninsulas Greek, Italic, Gallic-Spanish. The whole classic world, like the Homeric Achaea, was invaded, overwhelmed, and transformed by the incoming deluge of uncivilized peoples, which lasted longer than a thousand years, and took possession of the more highly cultured but decadent South called the Roman Empire. The medieval history of Europe is largely the record of this fierce, diversified, inces-

sant struggle between European North and South, and the conflict is by no means harmonized to-day.

But as we are now looking at Homer and following up the historic fulfilment of his work, we should note that this last European Irruption may be seen germinating in his poem, and taking there its primeval shape, as we have already observed. For Homer's song must be seen unfolding along with civilisation itself, if he be his race's supremely creative poet. In his vision lies the foreshow of what is to happen down the future centuries. So it is that History becomes his best and ultimate interpreter.

Five times we have observed this barbaric Irruption of the uncivilized savage of the North pouncing upon the civilized but enfeebled South, which fact we find already in the remoter historic background of Homer. And indeed such Invasions have occurred far oftener than five times if we take into account the lesser attacks. Is this recurring round of victory, degeneracy, and then evanishment of the old victors into the new, a law of History, especially of the History of Europe? Was the late World-War simply another fresh phasis of the same old cycle, in which we at present are merely brief transitory atoms? It would seem that civilisation, as it has wrought hitherto, while refining the spirit, enervates the body, and that the savage stock from the primordial uncorrupted folk-life brings the fresh generative material, into which every cultural nation has to be dipped for renewal

after having gone through its cycle of rise, bloom, and decay.

Such a recurring baptism into the primordial elemental stuff of the World's civilisation has to take place when it has used up a city, a people, or a race. Thus even the savage has his very important part in the historic development of total humanity, for it is the uncorrupted uncivilized man who is to furnish the fresh ethnic protoplasm for starting the new civilized people. Civilisation is indeed a hard, quite pitiless master, or has been so up to date—how many nations has it seized for use, worn out, and thrown away during its historic record! Thus there seems to be a superintending power which compels the individual as person, or as nation, and even as race to exist and to pass away for the universal goal of total mankind. Whereat the protest may be heard: can not civilisation be brought to change its process and become a little more human if not humane?

Hence at this moment the question rises with over-whelming poignancy: Is there to be still another savage Invasion from the North, possibly more destructive, more bloody and barbarous, and perchance more lasting than any of those hitherto recorded? Is civilisation to take another dip into the primal ethnic protoplasm, say now the Slavic, with possible co-operation from the Teuton and the Turk? For Russia to-day is reported to have the largest army in Europe, fully equipped, and well-disciplined, ready to make a tiger-spring upon the

older and more civilized portion of Europe. All the world is gazing at the scene and wondering, what next? At any rate all the world has just seen at the Genoa conference Germany and Russia uniting to make a treaty in defiance of the other nations there assembled. What does the omen signify to the future? Let old Time work out the answer, for that is his business.

VI. Finally we should not omit to mention the poet's most recent illumination, namely to-day's Irruption from the North against the South of Europe, as the last repetition up to date of that ancient Greek germinal conflict, in which Homer was involved and seemingly evolved. In the World-War just concluded, Teutonia again put on her armor and swept down upon those Mediterranean peoples, whose civilisation she had first assailed historically some two thousand years ago. For Italy, France, and finally Greece, when Constantine the Last had been gotten out of the way, were all arrayed in opposition to the advancing German assailants of the North. With both these two central antagonists were conjoined other combatants of the East and of the West, so that the conflict took the huge proportion of a World-War, as we hear it commonly named.

Such, then, is to-day's Northern Irruption still driving Southward in the main, as it did when it started long before Homer's time a wee Greek embryo now barely discernible with a strong eye through the twilight of antiquity. But Homer

knows of it and mentions it as something antecedent to his own grand Mythus of Troy, with which it is deftly interwoven. For that Mythus is the theme upon whose elaboration he concentrates all his creative energies, and which he has made the greatest and best known of its kind on our planet. For like all supreme poets, Homer in conception and expression is mythical, and hence some special consideration must be given by the outreaching student to his Mythus.

IV.

HOMER'S MYTHUS OF TROY.

From the historic Present before our eyes, let us turn and look back at the remote mythical Past and see if the two extremes are not deeply interrelated. We have just enthroned History as the best, truest and longest-lived interpreter of Homer and his Trojan Mythus, and have watched their completed fulfilment in the events of our own time. We may again repeat that the Trojan War is 3000 years old more or less, and is just now bursting forth into a renewed, far wider-spread and more glowing intensity.

In view of the circumstances, the reflection will keep busying itself over the future: Homer will come to his full meaning and attain his supreme universality when the whole globe gets to fighting his Trojan War—the entire Orient versus the entire Occident. Just now some such prospect ap-

pears looming above, obscurely but portentously, on its way toward realisation. For at present only a half of the earth-ball, about one hemisphere, is more or less directly involved in this Trojan conflict (as we may still label it) and seemingly cannot finish it, being merely a moiety of total humanity, all of which has yet to pass through this deepest ultimate dualism of the World's History, and after such long trial to reconcile it for all and forever. Even then we may conceive that Homer will have to be read still as the first germinal utterance of the race's profoundest and most significant terrestrial experience.

But it now stands next in line to give a quick turn back from the instant Now to the far-off Then of this Trojan affair, and to take a good look at the poet's *Mythus* of Troy—*Mythus* we say, not myth or even mythe, which words, though derived from the same Greek vocable, have obscured, in their English usage, the needful shading of the original term.

Somebody has said that the most famous, as well as the most resultful, of all wars known to history was just the old mythical war of Troy recorded by the poet Homer. This seemingly contradictory statement brings to light a fundamental problem for the comprehension of the ancient Trojan conflict: was it historical or mythical, or perchance a good deal of both? Our greatest modern historian of Greece, George Grote, banishes it from his sunny Olympus of History, and he whelms it down, as if

he were another Zeus, into the dark factless Tartarus of Mythology, the abode (according to his judgment) of all such pre-historic monsters. Still Grote, in defiance of his first universal damnation, later summons up and sets forth certain elements of the mythical Homeric poems, which elements he acknowledges to be historical, though documented only by Mythology. We side with the illustrious historian of Greece against himself in this last attitude of his toward the Mythus, though he ought to have made it a principle, not an exception, in his work. That is, every great legend evolved and preserved for ages by the folk, has in it two constituents, Fact and Fiction, History and Fable, or an historic content in an imaginative form. So the supreme question with the fully appreciative reader of Homer is to see and to enjoy and to appropriate both greatnesses of the double-winged poet, his reality and his ideality—to behold the deepest personal experiences of his life creating their splendid poetic vesture through his imagination.

Now Homer's greatest production, indeed his sole one in the large sense, is the Mythus of Troy, with its evolution and epical sublimation into his two poems, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. For in truth we may say that he made the Trojan story as we read it to-day; or better, he made it over, organized it and transformed it out of its crude, disconnected, and locally dispersed materials which were scattered far and wide throughout all Greece. Such we deem his first grand act of poetic transfigura-

tion: he unified mythical Hellas with its seething recalcitrant mass of local tales and heroes pertaining to Troy and to the Hellenic conflict against the Orient. Just as he united the many Gods under the one Olympian Zeus for the Greek religious consciousness, so he united the many folk-tales under the one all-inclusive Mythus of Troy for Greek Art, both poetic and plastic. As he has shown himself monotheistic, so he in the same spirit cannot help showing himself monomythical. Unity we find everywhere as the deepest aspiration of the Homeric soul: he will also unite and transmute into one epic language the many Greek dialects, perhaps the most unique of all linguistic feats. And what does the *Iliad* but reunite and reconcile the angry Achilles with his own Achæan folk first, and then with his whole Hellenic race including Troy? And the return of Ulysses is his return to unity and harmony with his family and his people, and himself, after long separation and estrangement. Indeed Homer's own name hints the adjuster, the organiser, the reconciler—the man who puts together, though other meanings have been foisted upon its natural etymology.

But let us haste to add that the universal poet does not narrowly confine himself to the single Mythus of Troy; on the contrary he makes it the grand receptacle of quite all the mythical treasures of his fantasy-gifted Hellas. Much he tells about the life and exploits of the great national hero of the Greek people, Hercules; nor does he forget the

Athenian hero Theseus, both belonging to the afore-time. The ship *Argo* with its wonderful voyage and voyagers, as well as the Calydonian boar-hunt in far-western Aetolia, old tales of long-ago, he interweaves into his newer and vaster Trojan story. In general, the poet will make his *Mythus of Troy* the one all-embracing organized receptacle of Greek Mythology. We do not say, however, that he has collected every little shred of folk-lore which his people have made, and put it into his collection, like a modern scientific observer, like a Grimm for instance. On the contrary he evidently knew unworthy stories which he has not told us; we have to think that now and then we catch him rejecting hideous unclassic accounts which others, especially Hesiod, have transmitted to us from mythical antiquity. Homer is not without a considerable display of artistic judgment for the reader who watches his likes and dislikes; we may detect his innate delight in a certain class of words and of images, in lofty locutions and lowly turns, as well as in Olympian legends and humble fairy-tales. Far more of conscious design, and of art, and even of artificiality he has than he usually gets credit for. Homeric simplicity, yes, by all the Gods; but let us not forget his frequent pompous big-wordiness, which sometimes swells over into turgidity, as is the case also with Shakespeare not unseldom.

But what are the main details of this *Mythus of Troy*, out of which flow Homer's two poems, and which is, therefore, the fountain-head of European

literature? Paris, the son of the Trojan King Priam, visiting the Spartan King Menelaus, has eloped with the latter's wife Helen, and, taking along with her a good deal of property not his own, has fled and found refuge in Troy. An embassy of Greeks demands the return of the woman and of the stolen wealth, but is refused by the Trojans. Thereupon follow the preparations for war under the leadership of King Agamemnon, brother of Menelaus. Ten years are said to have been spent in getting the expedition ready, which at last, after many hindrances, sets sail from Aulis on the Beotian sea coast across the Egean, and in time reaches the Trojan plain. Such is the simple kernel of the story round which have swathed themselves for thousands of years all sorts of elaborations, since the Mythos of Troy with its tale of Helen is still told to-day under ever-shifting new shapes in all civilized tongues. Strange fascination! The poetic mind of Europe seeks to mirror itself at every important node of its evolution in some form of that antique legend of Paris and the runaway Greek wife. Well may the vigilant reader keep a keen look-out for the reason of this unique phenomenon.

More than 100,000 men in 1186 ships, according to the muster-roll set down in the Second Book of the Iliad, constituted the Greek army, which far outnumbered the Trojans and their allies. The unanimity of continental Greece from Olympus in the North to Nestor's Pylus in the South, including

the Western islands and some of the Southern, as Rhodes and Crete, is the ever-renewed surprise of this undertaking, for the Greek people were never again so united in spirit and in action during all their history. And wholly spontaneous seems this enormous popular urge to capture the city and restore Helen, even if the enthusiasm was started through embassies. But is she worth the outlay? Hence from old Greece till now rises the question: what does Helen stand for to those 100,000 Greeks ready to die in her cause, whatever that may be? A beautiful but dubious woman, repentant indeed and longing for her Greek home, yet not so bad-off in Troy—the Helen problem will come up again.

Another decidedly less ideal inquiry pertains to the feeding of such a large number of men so far from home supplies. The same difficulty occurred to the ancient historian Thucydides, who was also a soldier, and knew that an army had, first of all, to be provisioned before it could fight a single day, not to speak of ten years, the duration of Troy's siege. His solution was that a considerable part of the expeditionary force had to do what they did at home, namely cultivate the soil for a living. He even pointed out their probable tilth-field, the nearby Chersonese. Prosaically he adds: could the whole army have devoted itself to fighting alone, the war would have soon ended.

The evidence of the poem, however, shows no such agricultural labor performed by its soldiers. But it does indicate many times over that the army

“lived off the country”, in to-day’s military phrase; all the neighboring lands were plundered of their food and cattle by foraging Greek bands; the unwall’d villages were captured, the women and children enslaved, the men slain, though doubtless the most of these were absent fighting in the Trojan ranks. Especially Achilles is represented as having taken many such defenceless towns, though the hero found his limit when he ran against the walls of Troy, which he could not batter down nor surmount. The *Iliad*, as we all remember, starts with the quarrel between the hero Achilles and his leader Agamemnon over two such captive women.

Now this fact of a general pillage and devastation of the country has an important bearing upon the future course of Greek History, and furnishes one emphatic proof that Homer has an historical substrate which cannot be neglected with impunity. The whole coast of Asia Minor from the Troad to Lycia must have been quite overrun and depopulated during this long siege of Troy. Its inhabitants in the main sympathized with the Trojans, as we see by their muster-roll in the Catalogue of the Ships (Second Book). We hear nothing in the *Iliad* of those large and rich islands Samos and Chios; Lesbos is spoken of as ravaged by the Greeks. On the whole the neighboring neutrals, if there were any, would not be spared in the clashes and necessities of such a war.

Accordingly after the fall of Troy starts the

great migration from continental Greece to these largely dispeopled but fertile regions. The Aeolic, Ionic, and Doric colonists now make their appearance in history and take possession of the more or less vacant coast of Anatolia, and the near islands. These colonists we find its owners in historic times. Now there is a persistent tradition that Homer took part in this migration, quitting probably his earlier Thessalian home and finally reaching Smyrna, where he is said to have composed his *Iliad* a good many years after the Trojan War, one or even two hundred (some say more). Undoubtedly the locality was full of the fame of the grand event of the aforetime, with its many legends, and the poet often shows himself looking back at that heroic age with a feeling of the decadence of his own age in comparison. But the time's advantage for him was that the myth-making spirit of the folk had created and amassed a vast material of its tales and songs, which the poet found ready for his organizing mind and poetic transfiguration. Yet the strange fact keeps haunting us that he never once mentions this grand migratory movement of the older European Hellenes to their newer Anatolian homes, though he must have been a part and indeed a product of it, as both the content and the speech of the *Iliad* imply, if we look discriminatingly into their genesis.

Another enduring historic effect of this long Trojan War is to be found in continental Greece, which must have been drained of its fighting men

and of its accumulated wealth by the repeated levies for the desperate struggle with the Orient. Through the poetic narrative and later legend are scattered many hints which imply that the losses of the grand army in the field had to be recruited from the homeland; otherwise the struggle could not have lasted ten years, or much longer than one year. The result was that the Argive (or Achæan) territory, especially the Peloponnesus, became much weakened in men and means. Strong golden Mycenæ had spent both her strength and her gold, and her wide-ruling King Agamemnon was slaughtered in his own palace on his return from Troy—a theme for grand tragedy both Greek and Roman. But the historic result was that again a Northern rude but hardy and warlike tribe of Greeks, the Dorians, descended upon the exhausted Peloponnesus and took possession of it for the coming time of historic Hellas, displacing the far-famed Homeric Achæans or Argives. Thus Greek history tells chiefly of the Doric deeds done by Southern Greece, as recounted on the pages of her supreme historians Herodotus and Thucydides. But Homer is wholly silent about this cardinal historic event, though he must have seen at least the beginning of the great Doric invasion. This is what ended his glorious Achæan world, which he has celebrated with such detailed splendor in an idealizing strain of reminiscence. For the poet's mood in the *Iliad*, whenever he lets it be seen, is regretfully retrospective.

Thus Homer's song turns away from the two most important occurrences of early Greek History: the eastward migration to the Anatolian coast with its adjacent islands, and the southward invasion of the Peloponnesus by the Northern Dorians, who make themselves the successors of the Homeric Achaeans (or Argives). Yet tradition states and his poems imply that Homer must have seen at least the start of this new historic era of Hellas, which, however, he dislikes and deems degenerate. Hence he as poet flees back to the antecedent mythical time, which becomes the splendid home of his imagination, and he ideally escapes out of the disagreeable reality now taking place around him everywhere in Greece, east and west. In the retrospect of a century (let us say) he could observe the central position and the growing significance of the Mythus of Troy not only for his own age, but also, as it would now seem, for all futurity.

Greece produced pre-eminently two forms of national self-expression, Mythology and History, not to speak of her Art and Science. She is the greatest mythologist that ever lived; in that activity she has proved herself immortal; we in English use her mythical creations to-day far more than our own. Every people mythologises, especially at a certain stage of its culture, hence there are many mythologies of greater or less excellence. But it is agreed that the Greek Mythology is the best, the most beautiful, and the most universal; in fact the spirit of Greece is more adequately realised in its

Mythus than in any other of its forms of expression. Why? It was shaped mainly and centrally by Homer, who has shown himself to be the most original poetic genius that has yet appeared. So the loyal student of the poet must love Mythology, assimilate it, even believe in it as an utterance of the Divine Order unto man.

Here we may repeat that Homer's Mythus of Troy was the most comprehensive one in the whole range of Greek Mythology, also the profoundest of meaning, which, let us say once more, was the conflict between Orient and Occident, embryonically world-historical as we have come to know in the recent or still present World-War. That is, after the poet time has sought and wrought to make this Mythus of Troy universal, so we may call his achievement herein pan-mythical.

It is at this point specially that we are brought to recognize Homer as the most original poetic genius of Europe, or perhaps of the Race. For he created his own Mythology, undoubtedly out of already existent popular materials handed down to him, organizing and poetizing the Greek Mythus into that lasting form which it preserves essentially to this day. No poet before or after him has ever done quite such a grandly creative feat as that. And still further, the greatest poets succeeding him (Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe) have adopted, of course with changes of their own, and have assimilated in their work, his mythical shapes. Thus he not only made the Greek Mythology for himself,

but for others, made it eternal, at least according to our present outlook. And also it still works creatively, generating new poems with the ages.

This fact it is worth our while to expand a little more fully, confirming the same from the three greatest poets after Homer. In the first place Dante is saturated with the Classic Mythus, which he derives directly from the Latin poets, Virgil and Ovid in the main, who, however, took their mythical material from the Greek stream flowing down time out of Homer as fountain. And Homer also furnished to Dante the germ of the latter's grand Mythus of the Apocalypse, which is the mythical framework of his *Divine Comedy*, in the descent of Ulysses to Hades (*Odyssey*, Book XI). Our supreme Anglo-Saxon poet, William Shakespeare, shows everywhere in his works not only his external knowledge but his very soul's assimilation of Greek Mythology. And once he would overmake and re-poetize Homer himself in a deep-thoughted but much-scattered drama (*Troilus and Cressida*). But the most devoted follower and transformer of Homer and the Greek Mythus was Goethe, who entitled himself a Homerid, or son of Homer, renewing antique mythical forms of Hellas like Iphigenia, and even calling up Homer's Helen to fresh life and fate in the *Second Part of Faust*.

Thus we have to think that Homer to a large extent created the lasting ideal shapes of future poetry, for they fleet through all poetic expression since his time. Moreover other arts besides the

poetic take their origin from his Mythus, for instance Greek sculpture and painting with their modern successors. Nor should we forget that his special structure of song, the epic, has reproduced itself thousandfold after his pattern, which we may see even in the highest secondary poets, such as Virgil, Milton, Tasso. Yes, Homer must be acclaimed the most original poetic genius of our planet.

But other Mythologies besides the Greek have frequently been taken up by the literary mind, in the way of change or perhaps reaction. For instance, the Celtic Mythus of Arthur and his Round Table has always had its devotees as well as its reproductions not only in British but also in European literature, and it still is sending forth notable flowers. Then the Teutonic Mythus has had in the past century a very significant series of revivals in Richard Wagner's Tetralogy (*Ring of the Nibelungs*), and in Goethe's unique poem (*Faust*), not to speak of less famous elaborations. But perhaps the strongest reaction against the Classic Ideal in favor of the realistic present is found in the modern novel.

Still after a time of revolt and dissipation in the immediate transitory appearances of life, there is always a return of literature to Homer and his works for a fresh baptism into what is eternal of the written word, eternal through the test of thousands of years. It is true that the Homeric Theology is gone; it hardly survived as a faith the political life of old Greece except in spots. But the

Homeric Mythology as an utterance of the human spirit in art and poetry, is with us still, for its heart is that siege of Troy which we have so often emphasized as going on to-day, with an intensity and extensity greater now than in any aforetime.

V.

HOMER'S OTHER MYTHICAL SIEGES.

The siege of the walled city was the great military act of Homer's time. That of Troy was only one, but the last and culminating one storied in the ancient Greek Mythos. For the city with its fortified enclosure, to which the people could flee for safety from sudden foray or protracted invasion, was the final refuge and salvation of the folk-life when assailed. Most famous in Greek History was the siege of Athens during the Peloponnesian War. This historical siege as recounted even by prosaic Thucydides has many striking basic similarities to the mythical siege of Troy as recounted by poetic Homer. Indeed they are quite alike in their general outline, and may well be paralleled by the researchful student.

Now, Homer, besides that of Troy has told us in his poems about three other memorable sieges of cities which took place in the dim mythical period before the Trojan War, and which hint, as far as can be made out, the same underlying conflict. Thus they may be deemed faint preludings of the

greater siege to come, twilit forecasts of the Greek folk-soul in regard to its supreme task for all time.

Before the age of Priam, his Troy had gotten a bad name on account of the perfidy of his unworthy father Laomedon, who, after having received faithful service from two Greek Gods, Apollo and Poseidon, refused them their promised recompense and drove them off with insults, threatening to sell them into slavery, "and the ears of both of us Gods he vowed to shear off with his sword." And yet it was one of these deities, the mighty Earth-shaker, who had built for him "these city-walls that Troy might remain unstormed" (*Iliad* XXI, 443). Whereupon Poseidon in his wrath sent one of his huge sea-monsters to destroy the people and their fruits. King Laomedon, frightened if not repentant, consults the oracle, who tells him that his daughter Hesione must be handed over to the devouring beast. But the universal Greek hero Hercules then happening along at the right conjuncture, rescues the king's daughter and slays the monster, leaping down its throat and cutting through its belly. For which feat Laomedon had stipulated to the victor the immortal horses of Zeus; but the faithless king, when his daughter is saved and his realm is freed of its destroyer, refuses again to fulfil his promise, and gives to his heroic Greek savior some common mortal steeds—the perfidious Trojan ingrate! Whereupon Hercules sacks Troy and seizes the right horses. Then he leaves to Priam the son of Laomedon, who had

opposed the fraud of his father, the Trojan realm for a future fate.

Such, then, was the first mythical capture of Troy, whose ruler had shown himself defiant of and insulting to Greek Gods and to the Greek Hero, all of whom properly belonged to continental Hellas. An anti-Hellenic note we may hear already winding through this early legend of the first sack of Troy and the causes thereof, which legend seems already to foreshadow her future far greater war ending in the destruction of the maleficent city. For it will produce the champion thief of the age, if not of all time, Paris son of King Priam, who steals Argive Helen, and whom Troy will protect and so justify in his famously poetic act of grand larceny. At least European Hellas thus regards the deed, the doer, and the protecting city whose walls, therefore, must be breached if the dawning Greek world is ever to reach its sunrise.

A still intenser stress of conflict we feel in the remoter mythical background of the Homeric poems telling of the two sieges of Thebes, whose heroes were of the same national strain as those who fought the Trojan War, and came from the same locality namely, Argos of the Peloponnesus. It would seem that the same strong necessity rested upon the true Greek of that age to capture and put down Thebes as to capture and put down Troy. And the Theban task had to be done first, apparently because the hostile city was not far over the sea, but lay in the very heart of Hellas. The first

expedition failed and its participators perished except one; but their sons (the so-called *epigoni*) took up their fathers' cause, which was also that of all Greece, and triumphed over the antagonistic Theban city. Two famous Argive warriors, Diomed and Sthenelus afterward battling at Troy, had won their earlier guerdon of war's glory at Thebes.

The fact is that this strange inland city of Beotia always manifested both in her mythical and in her historical career a peculiar non-Greek tendency, which showed her drift back toward the Orient. Such was the source of her inborn unsolved tragic contradiction, which brought her into conflict with her nation, with her age, with herself. Hence she furnished so many themes of tragedy to the great Athenian dramatists who, belonging to the city most hostile to her spirit, failed not to exhibit on the stage her innermost fateful character. Homer strikes her name from his honor-giving muster-roll of the Greeks embattled against Troy, which was the pride of so many small Hellenic communities, though the Trojan expedition assembled at Aulis, a Beotian town not far from Thebes. The grand mythical deed of Greece in putting down the Asiatic trend of its race, found no patriotic echo in the heart of Thebes; she was verily the Oriental in Hellas who had first to be suppressed ere the more distant Troy could be taken. And after the great war, she still remained Trojan in sympathy, for she erected a monument to Hector as one of her heroes instead of Achilles—which monument

the traveler Pausanias still saw more than a hundred years after Christ, that is, more than a thousand years after Homer.

Such was the mythical record of Thebes, separative, rebellious to the common cause, anti-Hellenic. But her historic fame was yet worse; in the very crisis of the Greek world, in the Persian War, she sided actively with the Oriental, so that on the second most illustrious Greek muster-roll of those who fought at the battle of Plataea, she is marked down by the historian Herodotus as enranked with the Asiatic against Greece, and fighting at her best for the domination of the Orient in Europe. Thus the poet and the historian give the same character to Thebes, who really does over again in history what she had already done in fable. And hence, to complete the parallel, the Greeks once more invest Thebes after their victory at Plataea, capture it, and seek to purify it of its Asiatic taint so deeply ingrained in her spirit. Such may be called the third siege of Thebes, now the historic. Thus Homer with his *Mythus* again pre-enacts History.

The very name of this city suggests the hundred-gated Egyptian Thebes, which is also mentioned by Homer. The founder of Beotian Thebes, Cadmus, was said to have come from Egypt, or from Phœnicia according to another account. Her citadel was called the Cadmeia throughout the Greek historic age. But the most telling fact about Thebes is that in the two supreme conflicts of Hellenism

with Orientalism, the Trojan and the Persian, she turned inimical to her own Hellas, and played the part of the Greek devil, the inner destroyer of her own nation. Thus she presents the mythical prelude and the historic parallel to Homer's Troy, which she not only foreshows but also interprets.

Homer bespeaks but does not unfold this deep internal struggle of the Hellenic soul, which is most tragically represented in dualistic Thebes by the strife of the two Theban brothers, Eteocles and Polynices, who at last slay each other. "The brothers have a common altar upon which offerings are laid; but behold the fire of sacrifice, it separates into two hostile tongues of flame which will not mingle. Brothers they are and must remain together, though without hope of reconciliation—enemies still in the grave. Thus the Theban struggle is pushed to its last intensity in the direst domestic tragedy; from the first Asiatic dissonance, through Greek civil war, it has passed to fratricide. Then still further it drives to parricide in the tale of Oedipus, fabled King of Thebes, who murders his own father and marries his own mother" (see author's *Walk in Hellas* for a further study of mythical and historical Thebes on the spot, pp. 211-221).

Thus the attentive student continually hears throughout Greek legend, even before the Trojan War, as well as throughout Greek history down to this present moment, the one eternal Hellenic theme, the conflict between Hellas and the Orient. This, indeed, would seem to be the cardinal historic

event of all recorded time, the chief turning-point of man's civilisation as hitherto unfolding itself. But that which now engages our chief interest is that Homer has given the first and worthiest expression of this supreme world-making event with its enduring struggle, or its everlasting Trojan War. Hence we read him to-day with a wholly new illumination.

So we are brought back again to the historic substrate in Homer, after pondering and elaborating the mythical element in which he manifests himself with such poetic power. As in Thebes, so in Troy there is seen the reflex of History mirroring the same content that we find in the Mythus. Upon this fact, so significant for the larger comprehension of Homer, we shall again dwell with some further illustration.

VI.

HOMER'S HISTORICITY.

The justly eminent English historian of Greece, our favorite one, we may add, George Grote, has given himself much trouble to deny the historic worth of Homer and the events of Troy. Still we find him here and there qualifying his general denial, (especially in Chapter XX of his *Legendary Greece*), and granting to History some very important facts found only in Greek Mythology. He concedes that Homer furnishes true documentary evidence of the manners and customs of the poet's

time, also of the domestic, political, and social conditions of the age, though these be in many respects different from those of the later so-called historical Greece. That is, the poet, in spite of or rather by means of his mythical presentations, is nevertheless the authentic historical voucher, and indeed the only one, of the institutions of his period—Family, State, Society, and the Economic Order, as well as the time's Religion. Now, if Homer's *Mythus* was able to express and transmit these important matters, the most important indeed of human concerns, what more could History herself achieve in her own shape and name? For that institutional world which Homer has so vividly and completely set forth, is just the supreme content, the very soul which the historian is to embody in his work.

Still there is no doubt that Homer has his ideal strain which everywhere interweaves with his realities. In the first place he very pointedly proclaims himself as living and acting in a late, relatively degenerate age, which he often contrasts with the mighty era of his heroes both Trojan and Achæan, of whose exploits he sings. Homer has clearly fallen out with his own time, and betakes himself to the past ideal world of the Trojan *Mythus*, which he so poetically glorifies. At the same time he brings along his real world, the social life around him, for he cannot help himself—he cannot leap out his institutional skin, any more than he can run away from his own Ego. Thus the poets have always

done. Shakespeare, for instance, in his *King Lear* throws the action of his play far back into pre-historic Britain ideally, but really he is portraying the contemporary state and society of Queen Elizabeth's period—wherein his famous interpreter, Gervinus sadly misinterprets him.

Such, in general, is Homer's procedure in the *Iliad*: he celebrates and idealizes the former grand heroic age in contrast with his own little unheroic epoch, the decadent present. A similar and even more fault-finding pessimistic note we hear in ancient Greek Hesiod. Other deeper and subtler idealisations of Homer's own personal experience we shall find in the *Odyssey*, whereof later.

But the profoundest historic element underlying the theme of Troy is, as we have already emphasized, the enduring conflict between Orient and Occident. The Trojan War, we may re-affirm, is just at this moment being again fought with a renewed energy over a larger territory with a vaster outlay of blood and treasure and human suffering than at any former time. Forward and backward the battle-line is still swaying between Hellas and the Orient in the same general region—the two antagonists being animated with quite the same opposing principles amid all their superficial diversities. For the Greek is still the Greek and the Asiatic is still the Asiatic, as they faced each other some three millenniums ago, before the walls of little Troy, though their difference has become with the centuries infinitely deepened, and also broadened out till it

embraces just about the one half of the terrene sphere. On the Trojan plain the fight was only a wee embryo germinating within one and the same folk, the Hellenic, but to-day it sweeps into its conflict the races of mankind, Aryan, Semitic, Turanian—white, black, and yellow. That is, the Trojan War seems to be the only war hitherto waged on our planet which persists in universalizing itself over space and down time.

Am I justified in these strong and seemingly flighty expletives? If Homer is to be completely understood at present, he must be grasped as having some such ultimate theme for all mankind. He, the poet of the Trojan War, was, in the old sense of the word the maker (*poietes*) of it, though of course it was likewise made for him by his time, by his people, by humanity. And it has been growing ever since his day all through history in magnitude and significance. Homer starts literature, gives to the same its primal shape and push down the ages, as well as its deepest and most lasting content. His formal literary excellence, his so-called beauties, we are not to neglect, but the complete study of him probes to the eternal bed-rock of his genius, which is the aforesaid conflict of the Greek spirit with the Oriental.

We saw in the newspaper some days since that a Greek fleet had again crossed the Egean and had occupied Homer's Smyrna, having landed its army for the purpose of renewing the old struggle along the Anatolian battle-line of many centuries. Thus

Agamemnon's voyage with his thousand ships was re-enacted, and to ancient Homer can be now added his most recent illuminating, yea verifying commentary written by present History. Just that conflict is what he sang, preluding his Troy song probably at Smyrna, from which city to-day's Greek armament is advancing to attack the modern Ilium, as it in general may here be called. In this old-new Smyrna, too, the poet Homer was born, according to one ancient record, though not altogether credible. Still he must have experienced the battle-line here drawn, and its furious onslaughts; it is hence our opinion that Homer may well have composed his Troy poem at Smyrna, which city seems haunted yet with his personality, being perchance the birth place of his Iliad, though not of the man himself.

Accordingly this conflict described by Homer we call the First Trojan War, mythical in form but historical in soul, yea, rather the most deeply and permanently historical of all recorded events, becoming truer and realer to-day than ever before, and growing larger in its tremendous reality. Now between these two Trojan Wars, the first and the last as we have listed them, there is a long intermediate line of history whose nodal occurrences we shall glance at for the better appreciation of Homer's historical value.

1. Herodotus, the first Greek historian in time as well as in form and matter, though a good deal of mythology still clings to him, takes likewise as

his all-inclusive theme the grand struggle between Hellas and the Orient. According to his own statement he lived some four hundred years after Homer, during which time many lesser conflicts between the two contestants kept taking place. But the culminating effort which he recounted was the prodigious attempt of entire Western Asia marshaling millions of soldiers under Persian rule to subjugate small continental Greece. The result was, as we all know, Marathon and Thermopylae and Salamis, with which battles European History explicitly opens, though this historical Persian War was in spirit and in meaning a repetition of the mythical Trojan War.

Still this contest lay in the same race, for both Persian and Greek were Aryans, speaking the same ultimate root-words, as Comparative Philology demonstrates. The previous contest before Troy, however, lay not merely in the same race but in the same stock or folk, namely the Hellenic, for both Greek and Trojan were of one people, though divided into two opposing parties or tendencies, the Easterners of Asia and the Westerners of Europe. Moreover Ionic Athens through this Persian War rose to be the greatest of Greek city-states, as well as the chief preserver and transmitter of the Homeric poems, and also their transformer into the Attic drama.

An emphatic and lasting result of the Persian War was that the battle-line between Greece and the Orient became definitely laid down in an his-

torical document, which was known as the Peace of Callias about 450-449 B. C. It is practically the old Trojan line, and at this moment the Greek and the Turk are fighting across it with reciprocal advance and retreat, keeping up the world-historical see-saw between Europe and Asia, of which the first or mythical record is found in the poetry of Homer, and the second or historical in the prose of Herodotus. Thus the one most ultimate and genetic event in the cultural movement of mankind has created for itself the two forms of expression, that of verse and that of prose, for imagination and for thought.

2. The next grand crisis in the historic continuity of ancient Troy's conflict starts with the career of Alexander the Great, who, about a century and a half after the Persian attack on Greece, faces Eastward and sweeps past the old battle-line and overwhelms Persia and the Orient, even as far as the river Indus. He pushes quite to the primal sources of the Aryan race common to both Greek and Persian, as if he would tap them again for a fresh revivification and reconstruction of his declining Hellenic race.

At any rate Alexander and his successors, driving beyond that ancient Trojan boundary, conquered and kept and Hellenized Western Asia, holding it under a Greek cultural spell which lasted a thousand years, through many political and even religious changes. Thus the time-honored battle-line of Troy seems transcended, if not obliterated

for centuries. But no; it is there, though silent if not asleep.

3. Finally the aged quiescent conflict between Greek and Oriental suddenly flames up anew. It is the Arabian Mahomet who awakens the old strife and begins to drive Hellas, now Christian in her religion, out of Asia back to her primal Trojan limit, which thus awakes to fresh life. Moreover Mahomet is a Semite, and uprises with his new religion to take the place of the Christian. Thus the long submerged Semitic race bursts forth again, and supplants the rule of its old Aryan competitor, who has lost his original racial energy in Asia, and has failed to maintain the Orient against Semitic arms, religion, and civilisation.

A sudden mighty renewal and outbreak of the Asiatic soul is this eruption of Mahomet, which speedily overflows and overthrows much of the Eastern Greek Empire, and even streams across the sea into Spain and France. But it could not hold out, it too turned decadent, and rapidly lost its primal massive energy. So it came about that the weakening Semite was supplanted by another Oriental race, the Turanian Turk, a vigorous but savage stock which kept up the Orient's march against Hellas, where it is enranked for fight to-day.

4. The Turk in time reaches the Trojan battle-line, pushes over it and crosses the Egean, capturing the whole of original Hellas, and thus establishes himself in Europe. No Asiatic conqueror, not even Attila, had ever accomplished such a feat,

though long ago it had been attempted by Persian Xerxes. In 1453 the Turk took the last and greatest Greek fortress, Constantinople, and the entire Hellenic world was swallowed up in the Oriental tidal-wave quite as the Orient had been submerged in the great Hellenic overflow some eighteen hundred years before under Alexander.

Thus the Trojan battle-line was pushed westward by the Turk to the Adriatic and even to the walls of Vienna, from which he was in the end repulsed, and whose siege in 1683 marks the limit of the modern Oriental deluge of the Turks, which for several centuries threatened to submerge all Europe. The Turk's last convulsive effort at further conquest is usually deemed his siege of Corfu in 1716, whence he was finally beaten off in a crushing defeat, after which the tide turned against the Turkish conquerors, and began to roll them back toward their old seats in Asia. Such is the historic movement still going on, forcing the Oriental man from his long lodgement in European Hellas, which has lasted quite five hundred years, and driving him rearward to where is found that early Trojan battle-line first laid down by ancient Homer.

5. The most striking achievement hitherto enacted in this retrograde sweep toward Homeric Troy is the Greek Revolution of 1821-29, which about a century ago made antique central Greece of Classic fame independent of Turkey. During the hundred years of this new Greek independence till to-day, Hellas has been slowly gaining more and

more of her ancient territory, emerging from her hapless subsidence under the Oriental wave—her racking semi-millennial discipline in the World's History. Well may she ask: what means it all? And we have to query: whence such a unique gift for national fatality as has been hers?

This brings our rapid survey down to the present moment, when Hellas, having gained once more the old Trojan battle-line, seems to be dubiously teetering upon it backward and forward, very uncertain of the future. She still rises before us as if laden with her ancient curse of envy (*phthonos*) toward her Great Men, that peculiar Greek fatuity (*Até*) which her poets headed by Homer, her historians and her philosophers have signaled as her grand spiritual malady, as the fatal portion which always makes her tragic at the very heart of her success, in spite of all her splendid gifts and her ages-long world-historical defence of and devotion to the civilisation of the race's future.

Here, then, let us turn back to that old Homeric conflict which we now see to have been the most prophetic, fate-laden battle of the World's History, just that battle of the *Iliad*, indeed the truly creative one of all-bearing Time, and the most enduring one of historic duration, having lasted now some 3000 years and still going on, being renewed to-day with an enormous increment of power and territory on both sides. Does not Time's Oracle tell us that this is the most significant happening of Universal History? The three main Asiatic

racés, the Aryan, the Semitic, the Turanian, have at different successive intervals down the ages surged up to and over this Trojan battle-line, seeking somehow to get across it permanently, even to obliterate it forever. All in vain; there it stands to-day more deeply graved and more fixedly drawn upon the face of the earth than at any former age.

Indeed it may be said that just now the three Asiatic races before mentioned, the Aryan, the Semitic, and the Turanian, are for the first time fusing together despite all their differences of language, of religion, of culture, of polity, are consolidating into one vast mass of Oriental enthusiasm, or fanaticism if you wish, getting ready from distant India, Egypt, Tartary, to precipitate themselves upon this globe-dividing Trojan battle-line where little Greece is still standing as vanguard of Europe against the human avalanche of the Orient. Such has been her world-historical duty from Homer till now.

One other historic thought may be here passingly interjected for the studious reader: the three grand divisions of European History, Ancient, Medieval, and Modern, have sprung from the three mighty impacts of these three Oriental races upon the Trojan battle-line. The Persian attack starts distinctly Ancient History, the Mohammedan wakes up the Medieval World, the Turkish capture of Constantinople preludes Modern History, which opens with the so called Renaissance. And now the combined assault of all three foregoing Asiatic

racés, having placated their own furious religious and other oldest animosities, and having started the look and even the march toward the Trojan battle-line which separates them from the Occident, is the portentous Oriental phenomenon which nervous Europe is anxiously gazing at to-day, as it seems to threaten another mighty cataclysm which brings to agonizing birth a new era or a new æon of the World's History.

So it comes that old Homer with his Trojan theme is with us still, and fuller of grand significances than at any time of the past. And his far-reaching historic worth has been attested by the fact that his conflict at Troy between Europe and Asia has been repeated with increased emphasis at every new turn of time, till to-day that petty Trojan strife has grown in the evolution of centuries to be the earth's supreme menace. From the survey of the foregoing occurrences of history down to the present, we are brought to know and to affirm the historicity of Homer, while recognizing at the same time the mythical character of the particular events which he records in his poems.

But who is this Homer—can anything be known of his individual life? This singer who in his mythical garb has set forth the central chapter of the World's History, past, present, and future—what may have been some of the personal circumstances of his earthly sojourn? For poetic Homer towers up a greater hero than any of his heroes, greater indeed than all of his heroes, or rather he is all of them and something more.

VII.

HOMER'S BIOGRAPHY.

Whoever has hearkened with some determination and spiritual quest to the preceding narrative, has remarked the poet telling a good deal about himself throughout his Trojan Mythus. In a sense we may call it his autobiography set down in two parts or poems. For they reveal supremely that personality called Homer, even more fully than they do Achilles and Ulysses, who are properly but two sides or stages of the one complete personal development of their creator. Of course such a statement runs counter to the general view that Homer is absolutely self-secreting and indistinguishable from his work. "The most objective of poets", is the common cry; yes, but that very expression tells not a little about his personal character, and even implies where we are to look for him, namely in his poetry.

Still it must be confessed that, in the strictly formal sense of the term, there is no biography of Homer. This means that where, when, under what conditions Homer was born, lived, and died, cannot be historically documented. In a famous Greek epigram we hear of seven cities which contended for the honor of being the place of his nativity. Yet these seven might be easily increased by seven more. A number of brief notices of the old poet have come down to us, written in the ancient

tongue, but really saying next to nothing. One of these spurious lives goes under the name of Herodotus, but it seems to have been born at least six hundred years after the death of the Father of History, its putative author. Still the best authenticated statement concerning the time of Homer is found in the genuine Herodotus (II. 53), and runs thus: "It is my opinion that Homer and Hesiod lived four hundred years before my age and not more, and that they were the framers of a theogony for the Greeks."

Thus has written the inquirer or historian Herodotus, a careful researcher for his time. He adds with some decision, as if he knew: "I make this statement on my own authority." Accordingly the most trustworthy witness of antiquity and the most nearly contemporaneous with the poet, though four centuries later, places Homer's era at about 900-850 B. C. Other accounts vary both ways from this date by a hundred years and more. Such, then, is our best obtainable chronology of Homer's real existence. If Herodotus wrote, as is likely, the preceding cited sentences at Athens in the Periclean epoch, somewhere about 440-430, he must have heard at that time and place much discussion concerning the Homeric poems, their origin and purport, since the immortal Attic literature, then just in its bloom and highest fecundity, was the mighty child of Homer by direct Ionic descent.

The exact moment or day or year, or perhaps even the century of Homer's birth thus hovers in

the fleeting unknown, though nothing is more certain than that he was born once and forever. Quite equally indefinite is the point or spot of earth where he first saw the light. Many places all over Hellas claimed him at least as their infant, and in a sense he was born everywhere in and of the Greek world, and his poem is proof of the fact. For he was the universal Greek, and still we read him and commune with him as one of the grand incarnations of the universal Man. Still, even if we must do without knowing the plot of soil upon which he first opened his eyes, we can catch glimpses of the birth-place of his genius. For he has left, in considerable passages of his poem, traces of the early environment in which he was reared and rose to be a poet. Somewhere amid the vales and slopes of Mount Olympus, on whose peak the imaginative youth could see the Gods assemble in council and thence fleet down to mortals, he grew up to be a man and a singer of heroic lays. In that same region was the home of his heroic Achilles, whose training there under the ideal pedagogue Phoenix he has celebrated with so much affectionate detail (*Iliad*, Book IX), hinting doubtless in it somewhat of his own early discipline. Then not far away in Macedonia bubbled up the Pierian spring, the primal birth place of the Muses, seemingly before they were re-born of Delphic Castalia. Homer knows the locality (Pieria), and alludes to it in both of his poems.

While it cannot be proved that Homer was born

in Thessaly—this name he nowhere employs—he does show an intimacy with its external nature, an innate sympathy with its mountains and men, which would seem to be a product of youthful growth and familiarity. There is in the more Achillean portions of his *Iliad* the glow of a unique experience of the landscape, Thessalian, Olympian, Northern, which rises mightily in the background of his Trojan descriptions of events and persons. The style seems to partake of the colossal scenery (for instance in Book VIII), becoming more spacious, Titanic, grandiose in conception and expression as the action culminates. The wrath of Achilles, the love of his friend Patroclus, the vengeance against Hector, even his two reconciliations with Agamemnon and with Priam, are mountainous, sprung of an Olympian soul superhumanly struggling with its human limits.

In the life of Homer, which we are now attempting to construe from his own works, this may be called his Achillean Period. We cannot date it to the year, perhaps not to the decade. No matter; here his imaginative genius rises out of his own writ, in which he, the young Homer, utters his fiery bound-bursting spirit through his young hero Achilles defiant of authority. The poet we now may see as youthful world-stormer, in conflict with the law or rule over him, which has formally been handed down, like the scepter of Agamemnon. Such we may deem the prelude of Homer's own life, beginning in the First Book of the *Iliad*, which starts

with the ever-recurring strife between the man of heroic worth and the man above him in authority.

After some such fashion we are to sleuth the sly old Greek poet through all his masks and through all his characters, and hearken him telling ultimately on himself, for he cannot help it. Rightly called the most impersonal of poets is he, and the most objective—that is, the most elusive of self, and subtly secretive of his own Ego, which is, however, the hidden demiurge at work creating or rather recreating the world for his own self-expression. Hence we dare affirm that Homer is writing his autobiography in his two poems, which, when seen down to their first sources, reveal the pivotal stages in the evolution of the poet's total life. Thus the earliest Homer had his youthful protesting, world-storming, Titanic epoch, as did Goethe, his latest poetic brother, both epochs being quite alike in essence though thousands of years apart in appearance.

Reasonably certain is it also, from the tenor of the *Iliad* that the poet made a change of country from the early Thessalian scenes of his youth to the coast of Asia Minor, the locality of his Trojan War. Aristarchus, greatest of all Homeric interpreters in antiquity, believed that Homer was an Athenian. Thus the poet might have taken part in some phase of the epochal Ionic migration to the East, which seems to have had its chief center in Athens. At any rate the second distinct habitat of his poetry, if we may judge by its landscape and

general environment, can be located in and around Smyrna, which likewise claimed to be his birth-place along with other neighboring Ionic cities. Here he probably put together his *Iliad*, after a variety of personal experiences, one of which was that of a soldier campaigning against the near-by Oriental inland, doubtless the Lydian, whose empire was then arising, as told in Herodotus. For Homer knows too much about war with all its ways and wounds not to have had the immediate test of the battle-line in person. We have to think that he largely saw and took part in what he describes with so much detail and vividness. Moreover every able-bodied Greek man every where had then to bear arms. Nor should we forget that Smyrna was the natural center of the Trojan Mythos in its bloom, which gave material and creative impulse to the poet.

But after his Smyrnaean time, which represents more or less his middle life, Homer quit the Ionic East and started on his travels to the West of Hellas and of Europe, which he has poetized in the wanderings of Ulysses, the hero of the *Odyssey*. This period embraces the years which make the transition from middle to old age. The same personality we are to hear speaking and revealing itself in the *Odyssey* as in the *Iliad*, though the stage of life-experience as well as the form of expression in each poem be very different, in correspondence with the advance of the poet's ever-evolving selfhood.

Finally there is a persistent voice coming down out of antiquity from many sources that the much experienced Homer, at the close of his travels in old age, returned home to the Ionic East, not to Smyrna however, but to the near island of Chios, where he is said to have established a school for the singers of his poetry, affectionately called the Homerids, or the sons of Homer. This return too, along with its educational purport, should be taken as a genuine part or stage of his total life-work, and correlated with his two poems.

So it comes that we shall consider Homer's biography in three successive aspects or periods, whose titles can be set down as follows:

- I. The Achillean Homer;
- II. The Ulyssean Homer;
- III. The Chian Homer.

CHAPTER FIRST.

THE ACHILLEAN HOMER.

We have, therefore, to look now at Homer expressing the first phase or stage of his own total life in the character which he gives to Achilles, whose spiritual evolution is drawn with such smiting energy throughout the whole movement of the *Iliad*. Indeed we shall find that the inner uniting sweep of the entire poem is just the grand discipline of the Hero, and hence we add, of the Poet too, who is always self-revealing in his own work.

So we are called upon to scan with searching glance this portrait of a young man, perchance verging toward middle life but hardly yet arrived, and thus different from the older, more experienced mind which is limned in the *Odyssey*. The first period of the poet we may deem it in a general undated way, indicating the earlier stage of his evolution as mirrored in a great achievement. For Achilles is in essence Homer himself, projected of course into a former age with its supreme event, the Trojan War. So our attempt must now seek to see beneath his mask and to commune with his soul as it unfolds and utters itself at its principal crises.

Hence the reader is for the nonce to leave in abeyance the very common prejudice (if he hap-

pens to have it) that Homer's personality lies hid in an impenetrable obscurity, that his selfhood is so disguised in his work that it cannot be known or even imagined. This opinion is so universally found in Homeric literature, that for a long while we accepted it as the undeniable fact about the poet, till upon a time we began to look for ourselves, disregarding the ever-repeated tradition of the total unfathomability of his Ego. Then the man began to show himself in the very movement of his Psyche, which is ultimately what we wish to find and to appropriate in the study of Homer.

For his book, which he has imparted to us with such convincing sincerity, is at last to be seen and construed as the disclosure of his own personal history, the very act of his self-revelation. In other words Homer is at his spirit's confessional in his *Iliad*, and is telling on himself, if we but rightly hear him. Thus his poem must be finally conceived as autobiographic despite its alien form, alien to us, however, far more than to him, for the immediate, directly introspective record of the soul is not yet his, indeed not yet his world's. Homer, being the original and the primordial poet, is at one with his imagination and its shapes, which, however, contain and manifest what he is in himself and what is himself, namely his personality.

Accordingly Homer is not only his two poems but is more than they are, we venture to think, greater than they are, as the creator is greater than the created. His life is what we wish to get

at and to make our own if possible, holding intercourse with that ultimate power of his, more originaive of human expression than any yet born to time. For in him begins the real genetic word out of which flow poetry, art, literature whatever man has most worthily uttered unto man. Can we somehow catch him in his soul's very act?

Of this unique gift of his genius we may find him sketching a picture in his Proteus, the Old Man of the Sea, whom Menelaus has to catch and to consult, making him appear in his true form and tell his secret (*Odyssey*, Book IV). Homer is himself the Proteus who has the ability and the mutability to assume all external shapes, the running water, the leafy tree, the furious beast and creeping reptile, in fine the whole world of Appearance, which the reader (like Menelaus) is to grasp and penetrate till he reaches its central creative energy. Thus the poet mythologizes himself undergoing his varied poetic transformations, as the master of all possible metamorphoses, which he takes on for his ultimate self-expression. In like thought Dante defines himself as poet to be "transmutable through all guises"; inherently metamorphic (*per tutte guise transmutabile*).

Very significant is it, therefore, to catch Homer turning back upon himself and defining himself, of course not in a reflective way, but in the form native to him, the mythical. We are not to forget, however, that this act of self-inspection and self-description is found in his *Odyssey*, the poem of

his older time, when the man naturally looks backward and inward in order to post the book of life. Such is the Protean Homer, infinitely self-transformable—but how are we to handle such ever-shifting appearances, the illusive shapes of this poetic Panurge?

To such a problem likewise the answer is given: through all this multiplicity of the senses you must persist till you come to the One underneath the outer varied play of forms, to the Man himself, that is, to his very Self. At least some such intimation seems to lurk in the poem's own designation of Proteus, though it sounds somewhat cryptic: "He is the true, the immortal; without error, without death; he knows the depths of all the sea" of existence (*Odyssey* IV). Such strong premonitions of Plato's Idea Homer already shows, though not in the abstract terms of the philosopher, but in the imaginative semblances of the poet.

Accordingly we shall seek to catch a few autobiographic flashes from the *Iliad*, following what appear to be some hints of its creator himself about himself. Achilles rises the dominating character into whom Homer pours his full selfhood at his present highest and best. Hence our problem now is to seize and to hold our transmutable poetic Proteus till we make him show what he really is, the very truth and everlastingness of himself.

I.

THE HERO AS NATIONAL.

Achilles is, in the first place, to go through a course of training which makes him completely national, evolving him out of a narrow provincial spirit into the Hero of total Hellas, the representative of the entire undivided Hellenic folk, both Greek and Trojan. Such is, when rightly seen, the national movement of the whole *Iliad* as it unfolds from its opening book to its last, and incarnates itself in the evolution of its Great Man, Achilles.

The first essential fact and word of the *Iliad* is the wrath of Achilles, of its vengeful hero; the last essential fact, though not the last word, of the *Iliad* is the reconciliation of Achilles, its implacable hero now become placable even toward his foe. The twenty-four books of the poem move between these two psychological stages of its one supreme personality, upon whose mental attitude a great national event is made to hinge. Thus we have the record of a cardinal human experience which presents the question: what is the individual to do with his offended self in the supreme crisis of his own career and that of his nation? The problem is presented with so much intensity and sympathy that we cannot help feel the suffering poet in his passion-riven Achilles; Homer himself has gone through these soul-wrenching trials, has known these Oceanic tossings between wrath and reconciliation. Fur-

thermore he as poet has to project them out of his heart into the relieving word that he get free of his spirit's crushing burden. So we should again note well that all of Homer's poetry is ultimately a personal confession in spite of its naive objectiveness; the very sincerity and necessity of his song proclaim that he has to sing his autobiography, and can at his deepest sing nothing else.

One of the transmitted difficulties about the *Iliad* is that its title is a misnomer, or at least suggests a wrong meaning. For the term *Iliad* naturally implies a poem upon the whole Trojan theme from start to finish, the song of Ilium in its entire mythical content. But the poem *Iliad*, as we have it, is a very brief episode embracing only a few days of the ten years' war, not to speak of the many consequences springing from it and included in the full sweep of its occurrences. And the mentioned episode is limited to the one mighty experience of Achilles, between whose ups and downs, however, the numerous incidents and personages of the entire war are interjected. Hence, too, the whole career of the hero is not given, but only the one central epoch of it. So the *Iliad* should be properly called the Achillead, if designated after the manner of the *Odyssey* or the *Eneid*, that is, if named from the hero whose typical deed, or rather cycle of experience it celebrates. Some authors, (notably Mr. Grote) have used this term for a portion of the *Iliad*, especially for those books in which Achilles takes part in person. Such a view of

course tears the poem to tatters and leaves it a ragged batch of disparate songs. But the evolution of Achilles is what centralizes into unity all the variety of the *Iliad*, which thus becomes rightly the Achillead.

Taking Homer as mirrored in the leading psychical states of Achilles which are set forth in the *Iliad*, we may trace three distinct stages not externally dateable, but internally recognizable and to a degree definable. As already indicated, we find signs of the youthful poet in his Thessalian home, where he also places the birth and rearing of his hero, Achilles, these being primarily his own. The mountainous landscape of Olympus, seat of the Gods, dominates the sublimer scenery of the *Iliad*, as the Olympian deities from on high dominate the course of its events and the actions of its persons. Then we witness the double breach, with the double overcoming thereof in the soul of the hero which reflects itself in the words of the poet, who must have felt the same life-experience in order to tell it with so much sympathy. These three stages we may discriminate a little more fully.

I. The young Thessalian (or Phthian) Achilles is more intimately known and described in his native environment than any other Homeric character. The Ithacan setting of the *Odyssey*, for instance, is in comparison a foreign knowledge, evidently acquired through temporary visits, and possibly in part through hearsay, since the poet more than once shows himself uncertain of and even mis-

taken about the island's topography. Then in the spirit of young Achilles we already are made to feel a protest against his circumstances, a bound-bursting urge prophetic of his future heroship. Storming against his own narrow pinfold, the young poet projects into his wrathful hero his own tempestuous struggle with the fetters of his imprisoned but aspiring spirit.

Hence the birth of Homer's genius we locate in Thessaly; his spiritual nascence takes place there mid the upheaving Olympian landscape, home of his Gods. For they constitute his first cognizance and earliest formulation of divine world-government, which, in one way or other, overrules and determines the course of his two poems.

Moreover it would seem that in Thessaly probably the young imaginative Homer becomes aware of the grand theme of his age, and indeed of all ages, the Trojan War, and sublimates it into a conflict among the Gods, not merely among mortals. For Olympus there overhangs both his body and soul, and makes him its poet. And Northern Greece had taken a memorable part in the grand Trojan enterprise, whereof the boy must have often heard in song and story.

We may, therefore, designate Achilles as Northern, Olympian, mountainous—the young heroic man as the ideal of the young daring poet, the very incarnation of the divine energy, in whom are mirrored the mighty convulsions of nature. He is gifted with the elemental power of his turbulent

physical environment, though in the milder civilized virtues he at first is wanting, even if he will win some of them through later experience.

It is evident that the land of Achilles in the North lies quite off to one side, and will not be specially concerned about the restoration of remote Southern Helen. Moreover toward the South and Agamemnon there is in that backward Thessalian folk a feeling of separation, of local prejudice, if not of downright dislike. Still those rude Northerners are the hardier sons of Hellas, and naturally furnish the strong man, the Hero. Hence they must be won for the great cause, if the Greeks are to be saved from defeat, and Helen recovered.

So it comes that we read, in a number of passages of the *Iliad* about the embassy of those two well-worded conciliatory Southerners, aged Nestor and youth Ulysses, to the retired Phthian court of the Northerner Peleus, father of the promising lad Achilles, in order to gain allies for the coming war. Thus we behold the two best heads of the South, the old man's wisdom and the young man's enthusiasm, on a mission to the outlying lukewarm North for help in the grand national enterprise. Great is their success; they win the royal father Peleus, but especially they enlist the future hero Achilles and his Myrmidons, who soon march out of their little confined nook into the arena of the World's History.

But that inherent difference and rivalry, if not jealousy, between Northerner and Southerner

breaks out into the open quarrel and separation, with which the poet starts his *Iliad*. Nearly ten years of warfare had gone by during which no little friction had been felt on both sides, when the culminating breach between Hero and Leader (Book I) takes place on the plain of Troy in presence of the enemy.

II. After a terrific convulsion both of mind and heart, the Northern hero gives up his mountainous wrath, and is reconciled with his nation's South and its ruler, Agamemnon. This signifies a cardinal stage in his spirit's development: he has learned to forgive, and to recognize a national principle above his individual passion. He represents the ever-recurring revolt of genius against tradition, of the self-lord against the over-lord, of originality against prescription. The young man, conscious if not over-conscious of his merit, runs his tilt with the older man, the lawful leader, who represents the established order. The South, Agamemnon's realm, was the more advanced in wealth and culture, and so the more conventional, and likewise the better organized division of Hellas; hence naturally it was more obedient and indeed submissive than the wilder, more elemental but stronger North. Yet this Northland was the right home of the Greek hero and of the Greek Gods, yea of the Greek poet too, the maker or remaker of this whole Greek world. The native original vigor of the Hellenic stock lay in the North, slumbering there indeed, but capable of being

roused to realize its latent genius for the supreme work of civilisation, which is the stake at Troy.

But now the emphatic point is that the acrid dualism between the North and South of Greece is reconciled, so that heroism and leadership, genius and authority, unite in the common national enterprise against Troy. Radical and prolonged have been the testing and the purification which the hero and his people have undergone, a kind of purgatorial discipline for the coming task. Through eighteen books of the poem has the trial lasted, when we behold the reconciled Achilles taking up into his new-won spirit the two previously opposing sections of the Achæan folk, the Northern and the Southern, each needful to and indeed supplementary of the other in the achievement of the grand national deed, which could never have been performed with that deep scission festering in the Greek heart.

Hence we may now acclaim Achilles the Achæan, or rather the Pan-Achæan hero, using a compounded word which the poet himself has sanctioned. That is, he has united and healed all European Hellas, the two previously divided Achæas, Northern and Southern, into the one soul ready for the fresh exploit. From his former narrow, local, Myrmidon stage he has risen to be the total Greek protagonist against the Trojan; the Pan-Achæan hero we may now title him in his present lofty attainment, even if there is yet to appear to him a still loftier goal.

But we are not to leave out of this epochal experience of the hero the biographic fact that the poet himself goes through the same trial, and so can recount it in all its fullness and intensity. Thessalian Homer shares at first in the wrath of Thessalian Achilles, and portrays it as if it were his own, which it doubtless was for a time. As already set forth, he too was a Northerner at the start, the young genius fervid with revolt against the transmitted authority. But he also overcomes his one-sided juvenile animosity through the bitter experience of life, and gets reconciled with his Greek world of prescribed order. So the poet in his turn advances into his Pan-Achaean stage of reconciliation, which he likewise celebrates in deepest sympathy with his hero and his nation.

Achilles has, then, become the reconciled Pan-Achaean patriot, eager to resume his warfare against Troy, and to join battle especially with her hero Hector. Thus, however, a new and mightier, more God-defiant wrath seizes him and urges him madly forward against the Trojan foe. The hero, in an irresistible outburst of volcanic energy, will overwhelm the Trojans, drive them back within their stone walls, and finally slay their doughtiest champion Hector, who dares remain outside in equal combat.

III. Now out of this second fresh paroxysm (as we may call it) of wrath which boils over against the Trojans, who have slain Patroclus, heroic Achilles is to rise and to recover from his revenge,

and to be reconciled with his deadliest foes, though they have shed the blood of his dearest friend. For he renounces even this his second, deeper-grounded rage, and ransoms the lifeless body of Hector to Priam the Trojan father and king. Moreover he makes a truce with Troy, seemingly the first and only real one in the whole Ten Years' War.

But now takes place another unique occurrence: the poem itself concludes upon this final cessation of warfare, apparently with some suddenness, which has always stirred wonder. For Troy is not yet taken, Helen is not restored, the purpose of the grand expedition is not fulfilled. Still there is peace, even if but temporary, between the two primordial adversaries of the one Hellenic stock, for the Trojans, as already indicated, are racially of Greek blood, though turning the face toward Asia. Evidently the Northern hero was not so very ardent about the recovery of the dubious Southern lady held a captive in Troy; he had another stronger motive for his share in the hostile expedition against the Orient. But Homer openly refuses to sing the death of his hero and the sack of Troy, both of which events he had already prophesied in his poem.

It is evident, however, that Achilles has advanced to a new higher phase of his spirit than ever before: he has risen now to be Pan-Hellenic in thought and deed, taking up and uniting within his soul the most profound and poignant dualism of the whole Hellenic people. It is on this height that the poet

perches his hero, and there leaves him to the gaze of all coming time. The last Book of the *Iliad* (the Twenty Fourth) is devoted wholly to this final personal sublimation of the Greek hero, whose supreme deed of heroism is enacted not on the field of battle, but in achieving the reconciliation and the unification of the deepest rift of his entire Hellenic nationality. At the same time the poet places this self-mastery of the hero over his mightiest wrath as the culmination of all his victories, as verily his most heroic conquest.

Thus the grand discipline of Achilles winds through and closes the poem, making it an Achillead, not an *Iliad*, for the movement of it from beginning to end is that of an individual soul evolving from the germ till the last complete flowering of the hero. The poet distinctly refuses to let Achilles enter the Trojan battle-field again—that would be a lapse, a descent from his supreme heroic altitude, and would tear open afresh the old Pan-Hellenic wound, now stanchèd if not healed. So the poet unfolds the supreme hero of peace out of the supreme hero of war, and then shuts his book. The later legend of Troy's fall Homer knows about and mentions repeatedly, but he emphatically declines making it the theme of his song—a most important fact for the full comprehension of his work.

IV. If we now take a searching look back over the preceding section, we observe the poem's hero unfolding successively through three cardinal

stages of a prolonged soul-wrenching discipline, to the end that he develop into and fulfil his destiny as the supreme national hero of the whole Hellenic race. These three stages we may here recapitulate:

(1) Achilles as Thessalian—his germinal starting-point in his original petty contracted Phthian homestead.

(2) Achilles as Pan-Achaean—reconciling his individual Northern conflict with Southern authority vested in King Agamemnon.

(3) Achilles as Pan-Hellenic—reconciling his conflict with Troy, and closing for a while the primordial cleavage in the Hellenic folk-soul between Western Greek and Eastern Trojan.

Moreover we are to observe that this experience of the hero is essentially national, and shows his sweep up from his insignificant little estate into being the supreme exemplar of political reconciliation and unity for his people. Herein we may reflect that he is to a degree typical of Greece herself—the small ever rising and aspiring the all. We can trace the fore-described three leading stages of Achilles through the whole of Greek history down to the present. For just that term, the Pan-Hellenic hero, is the designation which is most commonly and fittingly applied to contemporary Venizelos, who has sought with so much skill and courage to harmonize and unify to-day's scattered Greek peoples into one Hellenic nationality. Again we remark with fresh wonder how the last Greek hero repeats and interprets the first one, whose

national lineaments have been so enduringly limned by the old poet, who must himself have felt and seen them as his own.

Hence it comes next in course for us to observe the imaginative Homer portraying his present heroic personality (Achilles) not merely as national and objective, but as ethical and subjective; for the hero is now to be seen following not alone the outer national behest of the folk-soul but obeying the inner dictate of his own soul.

II.

THE HERO AS ETHICAL.

It is often said that the ethical consciousness is wanting in Homer, especially in his *Iliad*. Undeniable is the fact that both his Gods and his Heroes at times give a shock to our moral feelings—a statement which is also true of Shakespeare, of Goethe, and even of Dante. Still I shall hazard the assertion that the deepest strain in the character of Achilles is ethical, underlying even his national motive as set forth in the foregoing section. And still further, the much-sought unity of the *Iliad* is to be found in the ethical movement which not only indwells but ultimately propels its action.

Accordingly we are now to test whether the ethical predicates right and wrong, good and evil, duty and even conscience, are applicable to the hero as his basic principles of conduct. Can he be seen to be swayed by an inward monitor as the final guide

of his behavior? Does the poet depict Achilles in the hero's profoundest changes of spirit as a moral being? He certainly passes through some of the deepest personal experiences of which our mortality is capable: how shall we construe them in their ultimate significance?

In the settlement of this question, the first point is to note that the innermost movement of the *Iliad* deals with the Right, the Wrong and the Recovery from Wrong of the Hero, through all which phases Achilles passes not only once but twice in the course of the poem. That is, the Hero is shown in two grand rounds of soul-experience which include two mightily heroic Wraths and two even more mightily heroic Reconciliations. As this gives not only the inner spiritual axis of the Hero, but also the creative organism of the whole *Iliad*, we shall outline its leading members more fully.

I. FIRST ROUND OF THE ACHILLEAN SOUL-EXPERIENCE, moving from Wrath to Reconciliation, but confining itself to the Hero's own Achæan people (*Iliad*, Books I-XIX). Three main stages as follows:

(1) *Achilles in the Right*. The Northern Hero is dishonored and wronged by the Southern Leader, and retires to his tent in wrath, letting the enemy conquer—of which Trojan victory the poet gives a full record (Book I-IX).

(2) *Achilles in the Wrong*. His own Greeks in an embassy offer him apology, restitution, and reparation of the injury. He refuses their ad-

vances, and even rejects the prayer of his closest guiding friend and teacher Phoenix.—So the battle rages on without the Hero till the death of Patroclus (Books IX-XVIII).

(3) *Achilles' Recovery from Wrong.* His change, his grand self-conquest, showing his new heroism; his reconciliation, inner and outer, with his leader and his people (Books XVIII, XIX).

II. SECOND ROUND OF THE ACHILLEAN SOUL-EXPERIENCE, moving from Wrath to Reconciliation, but now extended so as to embrace the enemy of Hellas, the Trojans (Books XIX-XXIV). Three main stages as follows:

(1) *Achilles in the Right.* The Greek Hero as dutiful soldier now enters the battle, assails and destroys the foes of his people and of the Hellenic world. His exploits culminate in the death of Hector, the Trojan Hero, who was the slayer of his dearest friend Patroclus (Book XIX-XXII).

(2) *Achilles in the Wrong.* The Greek Hero's Titanic Wrath once more whelms him over the limit of his Right into Wrong. He maltreats the dead body of Hector against the instinct of a common humanity, which the poet voices in reproof. Also he violates in such conduct the will of the Gods, which is heard in the message of Highest Zeus: "Tell him (Achilles) that the Gods are angry at him, and I most of all." (*Iliad*, XXIV, 113.)

(3) *Achilles' Recovery from Wrong.* The Greek Hero again renounces his Wrath, and receives graciously in his tent Priam King of Troy

and father of Hector. The latter's corpse he ransoms and sends back to the city. At the same time he makes a truce with Priam and the Trojans, upon which highest all-hallowing moment of universal peace, both Pan-Achaean and Pan-Hellenic, the *Iliad* closes.

Such are the two symmetrical Rounds of the grand discipline of the Greek Hero, which constitute the very life of the poem, showing both its outer organisation and the inner process of its creative conception or idea. Moreover it is from the foregoing point of view that we can truly behold and realize the unity of the *Iliad*, its ultimate symmetry and oneness of structure and of thought. We may be permitted to believe that if F. A. Wolf had really seen, appreciated, and proclaimed in his famous *Prolegomena* this central ethical structure and indeed homogeneity of the *Iliad*, there would have been no Homeric controversy with its portentous mass of largely profitless brain-work, which has been squandered on both sides.

But that which the reader should now specially examine and assimilate, is the soulful process of the Hero, which he experiences in his own life's conduct, namely his Right, his Wrong, and his Self-restoration duplicated in his two supreme attitudes, toward his friends the Greeks and toward his enemies the Trojans. Such are the ethical terms in which the poet sets distinctly forth the ultimate factors in the training of his heroic Achilles. We may parallel them with the process of innocence,

transgression, regeneration—words which are perhaps more familiar to our moral consciousness than to Homer's.

Round this ethical core of the poem, as it may be called, rages the human maelstrom of war, passion, destruction. There can be no doubt that the *Iliad* bears in its Oceanic oscillations the extremes of the human Ethos—wrath, revenge, savagery on the one hand, reconciliation, forgiveness, mercy on the other. It would not be the great universal poem that it is—it would not be eternal for Greece and for all the world, unless it carried in its bosom the time's Hell and Heaven. And these extremes are battling not merely in the action of the poem but also in the heart of its leading character, of its Hero; most unethical we may easily prove Achilles, yet most ethical, otherwise he would not be the whole man. Both sides of him, the negative and the positive, are shown forth in all their contradiction, yet likewise in their final harmony.

We may, therefore, affirm that the poet's design, seemingly his conscious design, for he repeats it again and again, stressing to his hearer or reader that his Achilles is not to be taken merely as a physical Hero of surpassing strength and courage, but as an ethical Hero also. Certainly he is endowed with colossal passions, yet with the more colossal power of overcoming and transcending them, not only for once but for twice, and so for all. Human he is to the last degree, laden with many very finite predicates; yet divine too, hence poetically

the Goddess-born. Heroism he shows in conquering Hector, but a greater heroism over a mightier antagonist in conquering himself. So we are finally to behold Homer making his Achilles an ethical Hero, who meets, fights, and puts down the purely physical Hero in himself, winning a far more difficult and glorious victory than the external one over Hector.

How the poet would have us in the end regard his Hero is throbbd most feelingly in the fare-well words of Achilles to his broken foe, the aged king Priam, now a suppliant before him: "So be it, old man, as thou biddest; I shall stop the war as long a time as thou commandest." These are the last words we hear from Achilles in the *Iliad* (XXIV. 669); tendering such a voice of compassion and reconciliation he vanishes from our view, having reached the culminant peak of his heroic deeds, when the poet has unfolded his character to its supreme moment, which is his end but not his death.

And here we have to chronicle the utter failure of Homeric literary interpretation to appreciate and to set forth adequately this compassionate and conciliatory element in the total personality of Achilles. The emphasis has been all placed upon the warrior, angry, blood-thirsty, unappeasable. The most distinguished and influential English-speaking authors who have written elaborately upon Homer's *Iliad*, are doubtless the statesman Gladstone and the historian Grote. Different as

they are in spirit and even opposite on many points, they are alike in never getting beyond the wrath of Achilles in their views of his character and career. These two very able minds must have read and repeated hundred of times the double reconciliation of the Hero, still they show no realizing sense of its meaning and place in the poem or in the evolution of the Hero. Fundamentally pugnacious seem even these two peaceful Britons, somehow stuck fast in such a consciousness. Perhaps there is also some trace of folk-psychology in the destructive German criticism of Homer, which assails his poems so violently; with vengeance, even with venom it slashes the poet at times, especially when under the ruthless dissecting-knife of Lachmann and Kirchoff, though their first teacher Wolf is somewhat more moderate. And to-day the student of the old Greek poet, looking back at the massive Teutonic attack upon him led by the University Professors during the last century, cannot help recalling the present century's assault made by the huge German army in the same Southern direction upon the Mediterranean world.

Perhaps, however, we may attribute this peculiar lack of obvious vision in all Homeric literary interpretation to the traditional influence of an ancient classic authority. That famous ever-cited line of the Roman poet Horace, in which he characterizes Achilles, seems to have led and misled all future expositors:

Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer.

This little pyramid of adjectives merely gives one of the Hero's stages, the first as above described, while the other two stages, really the more important, are left out, seemingly for all coming time, if we may judge by the general drift of the literature of the subject. Still we believe that the open-hearted reader of Homer has ever communed with the total all-rounded Achilles, instinctively if not consciously, for it is just this ethical element which keeps him and his poem eternally alive, being true yesterday, to-day and forever.

Such then, is the outline in which we construe the Hero of the *Iliad* as ethical, as passing through the various stages of his inner discipline of wrong and right till he reaches the highest. Along the same lines the whole poem is to be seen organizing itself in its ultimate scope. (Those who wish to follow out this ethical conception and construction applied to the poem in all its details, may be referred to the author's *Commentary on the Iliad*, pp. 20-40, 423-30, 464-80, and throughout the entire work, which is an interpretation of the entire *Iliad* from this point of view).

But ere we start our next step, let us look back and take a quick survey of what has been passed through. We have seen that the foregoing ethical movement is manifested not only in the poem and in its hero, but also in Homer himself, and must be considered as a part or stage of his spirit's biography. The double wrath and reconciliation are to be found and realized by the reader in these three

forms: (1) in the poem as literature (objective); (2) in the Hero as soul (subjective); (3) in the poet as maker (creative). Certainly a lofty-minded school of life for this early, almost writless age: does Homer give any hint of its source and its master?

III.

THE HERO'S TEACHER—PHOENIX.

Whence did Achilles derive this unique trait of overcoming his natural disposition to wrath and revenge? The poet in a long passage (*Iliad*, IX, 427-605) has introduced the Hero's teacher, Phoenix, really his ethical teacher, for the three R's are not mentioned, nor are perhaps mentionable. Now the supreme lesson of this earliest Homeric schoolmaster we shall set down with all possible emphasis at the start: "But thou, O Achilles, subdue thy mighty spirit, for it beseems thee not to own a pitiless heart" (IX, 496). Such is the fervent adjuration of the Hero's soulful teacher to the wrathful inexorable pupil, that the latter begin his heroic self-conquest, far more difficult to him than any external battle before Troy. But the lofty-visioned pedagogue carries his lesson yet higher, indeed up to the very highest rule of the Universe, proclaiming: "For also Gods are placable (*strep-toi*, turnable, exorable) though far above us in might and excellence." Homer's noblest thought is this, we have often to repeat, voiced by that old Greek tutor, since he here rises to his sublimest

height in ethicising even his Olympian Gods, who are often in sore need of such a sublimation. And it may also be now foresaid that the Hero Achilles after the bitterest experiences of his life will finally attain to this loftiest precept of his teacher, Phoenix, realizing it in word and deed at his last appearance in the *Iliad* (Book XXIV, 670).

Homer undoubtedly speaks in and through all the characters of his two poems, though with different degrees of intimacy. Now if I were asked to select the one person in his works who most directly represents the poet at his highest, I would choose this Phoenix, the teacher of Achilles, to whom is given such a long and important speech in the embassy which seeks to reconcile the angry hero (See *Iliad* IX). There is a peculiar note of sympathy, of immediate personal feeling that makes the responsive reader cry out: "There! that must be Homer's own voice throbbing into his very words!"

Toward his former pupil Achilles, we hear Phoenix uttering the tenderest, even tearful exhortations which almost tremble in their warmth. Still the devoted preceptor was **now** a warrior with his own independent command, **being** the captain of the Dolopians, a small tribe of Thessaly. Hence he was not in the same tent with Achilles and Patroclus, nor was he one of the great Greek leaders, but in the present crisis the wise Nestor chose him as the safest man to conduct the somewhat anxious ambassadors into the presence of the wrath-

ful Hero. But when Achilles with passionate scorn had rejected the offer of conciliation, Phoenix, "bursting into tears" began his speech, whose central theme is forgiveness of wrong, "for the Gods are placable."

The first appeal of Phoenix is to the personal tie between himself and pupil. For if the latter quits in anger the Greek host and goes home, as he threatens, Phoenix laments, "how I would be left alone here away from thee! For to me did thy aged father, the knight Peleus, send thee when a mere boy, unskilled of war and speech, whereby men become distinguished. Therefore he advanced me to be thy teacher in these things, namely that thou become a spokesman of words and a doer of deeds." Such then was the call of Phoenix, the pedagogue of the Hero Achilles in the Thessalian land, whence he went to the Trojan war along with his soldier-pupil who, in the course of the nine years' fighting, has far outstripped his heroic rivals, and risen to be the Hero of all Hellas.

Well may that old Greek pedagogue (a true *paidagogos*) feel pride in his work, and take no small credit to himself for the success of his training. So he exclaims: "I made thee what thou art, O Achilles like to the Gods, and loved thee from my heart, since thou wouldst not go to the feast with any other person nor take food in the hall till I had set thee on my knees, and, cutting a slice of food beforehand and holding the wine cup to thy lips, I had stilled thy hunger and thirst."

Drawn from actual life is such a picture as well as what follows: "Often didst thou stain the doublet on my breast, in thy childish wantonness spirting the wine over me." Truly not an easy lad to train was that defiantly capricious urchin Achilles, who just now is giving a grown-up sample of his heroic obstinacy. But the pathetic tutor again tells of himself: "Thus I suffered much for thee, and endured many toils, being mindful that the Gods had not granted me any offspring; but thee I raised as my own son, that thou mightest sometime shield me from an unseemly death", which now threatens me with all of the Greeks through thy wrath.

Intimate personal experience is what breathes everywhere through these words and gives to them their soulful sympathy. We have to feel that Phoenix here voices Homer himself, who reveals the deeply emotional side of his genius, in strongest contrast to the Titanic outbreaks of the previous Book (*Iliad* VIII) which describes the all-overwhelming mightiness of Olympian Zeus. The keynote of tender affection now intones the poem. But this is not all: Phoenix is Homer as the teacher, prehistoric indeed, and long antecedent to text-book and school-house, still a genuine teacher instilling instruction through his word and deed, giving lessons in present conduct and also in knowledge of the past, as handed down by the people's own message of folklore and song.

We find that the old teacher employed two methods of instruction—example and precept. By per-

sonal conduct he was to be all what he taught; so it comes that Phoenix here first recounts his own deed of conciliation. Then he elevates such action into the realm of the divine order, telling with fullness and emphasis that *the Gods are placable*. Finally he interprets an old mythical deed to enforce his instruction.

As this is the best example of the school of Homer in Homer, with school-master and course of study quite fully presented, we may expand it a little.

I. To the young Achilles in wrath, Phoenix now narrates a chapter taken from his own youthful experience, whereby he intimates what his pupil ought to do in the same spirit. For he took the part of his wronged mother against his wronging father, who thereupon cursed him, but instead of yielding to wrath and avenging wrong, he quit his home and realm, becoming an outcast wanderer. He would suffer evil rather than do it, especially to his parent. In this state he came to Peleus the father of Achilles.

Thus Phoenix had done in substance what he now begged Achilles to do, illustrating his doctrine by his own example, and that early act of forgiveness was what had made him the teacher and companion of Achilles.

II. Next let us mark how Phoenix appeals to the highest example, namely the Gods, who are placable, being appeased by the culprit's prayers and offerings. So be thou too, O Achilles, ap-

peased by these propitiatory presents from thy high injurer, the royal transgressor against thee, King Agamemnon—be like the Gods, placable.

Such is the religious instruction given by this school of Homer in which the teacher tells the offending pupil to quit his offence, and to assimilate himself to Deity. At this point we touch the loftiest peak of Homer's poetry, and hear his central insight, that which not only illustrates but unifies his entire *Iliad*. For this poem we find now to be based not upon Wrath alone, for here is also Reconciliation as the final uppermost achievement. And the Homeric world-order is seen to do its supreme work through forgiveness. Really Phoenix the teacher voices the poet at his grandest climacteric.

III. The third lesson which the teacher Phoenix imparts to his pupil Achilles in the present interview, is a fable taken from the aforetime, which illustrates the present situation, namely the story of the angry Meleager. Here we behold Homer using the Mythos for education in right conduct, moralizing, so to speak, the old fables of the people. He probably adjusts the events of the tale to his present purpose. Thus we are reminded of the use of Greek legends in Plato and the philosophers. Homer seems here not only mythical, but paramythical, reconstructing and re-telling the Mythos with a new intention and application of his own.

Such are the three lessons which we may overhear Phoenix (or Homer) giving in his school to his pupil, who certainly needs them. So we are

allowed to be present at one session, and only one, of the old Homeric instructor. All three lessons have a single object, a single content: the need of conciliation, of pardon, and remission of wrath—revenge must be given up, though this be the hardest problem of the individual and of the age, especially of that hot-tempered heroic age. From this point of view we may acclaim Homer to be one of the world's great teachers, opening his school with the dawn of civilization, and giving his lesson of placability, more needed to-day in Greece and in Europe than at any previous time of savagery.

Thus concludes the part of Phoenix, the tutor of Achilles, who utters the most exalted standpoint in the whole *Iliad*. He speaks only once, making the one very lengthy and significant harangue, quite different in character and style from any other speech in the poem. And he stands out markedly individualized from any other speaker; he is essentially the theoretical man, the thinker, amid that boiling mass of active Greek fighters, though he too is "captain of the Dolopians." He may be called the philosopher of that Greek army, giving in his talk the philosophy of the poem, its central creative idea in its movement from heroic Wrath to more heroic Reconciliation, which is in the end to be fully realized by and in the Hero.

Moreover we behold in this case as in so many others, that Homer is the prophet of the coming Greek historic age with its evolved art, poetry, and also philosophy. His Phoenix in seeking to make

the Greek Gods ethical, tackled the same problem which gave so much trouble to Xenophanes, Plato and the later Greek philosophers of historic Greece.

Still Homer's Pantheon as revealed in his two poems is in certain respects his grandest creative deed, to which must be assigned a cardinal position in his total achievement. Next then we shall take a little journey to his Olympus and commune with its divine inhabitants—in a duly appreciative, if not quite worshipful mood.

IV.

HOMER'S RELIGIOSITY.

When Homer spake through Phoenix, his supreme apostle, he gave utterance to what is most excellent in the Greek religion, if not in all religion. It is true that his formal organisation of divinity is not yours, nor mine, nor anybody's to-day, probably; we cannot now bend the knee or chant an orison to Olympian Zeus. Still we are to see that Homer at his best could and did rise through his theological scaffolding, into the realm of what may be called universal religion, whereof Phoenix became the voice in his poem. Religiosity we can name this strain pervading the whole personality and work of the poet.

We must, however, stress the fact now that Homer is by no means always perched upon this highest height of his religiosity—perhaps he attains

its full expression in doctrine but once, and but once finally in the deed. Homer has his lower and lowest stages, out of which he is to unfold to his best. The poet is, therefore, in himself a growth, an evolution, especially in his religious consciousness, of which he passes through several discernible stages already in his *Iliad*.

And here it is in place to emphasize that this *Iliad* of Homer is quite as distinctively a religious poem as is Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Both take their start from an Upper World of Divinity: the one from the Heathen Olympus and the other from the Christian Heaven; both continue this supernal influence upon the man below till their close. Both poems are, accordingly, in their deepest purport constructions of the Divine Government as it controls and directs our terrestrial life, are revelations of the ways of Providence to our erring, ignorant very finite humanity. Thus what we may call the original divine presupposition of both poems is quite the same, though their systems of faith in ritual, in organisation, and often in ethical appeal be very different.

Homer has, therefore, primarily and fundamentally this ultimate God-consciousness, which drives his genius to its grand poetic creation, and which expresses itself most immediately and combatively in his *Iliad*, but serener and deeper in his *Odyssey*. We have to think that Homer made for his people a more independent and original Bible than did or could Dante, who had to lean upon the Hebrew

Scripture for the transmitted religious substructure of his poem. But Homer built his own temple of Divinity, undoubtedly out of transmitted unorganized materials, and his constructive genius has made his two poems supremely architectonic, in spite of modern disintegrating criticism. Still both Homer and Dante take as their ultimate postulate God and His World-Order, which they are to reveal unto man.

Now this universal element in Homer's particular religion we shall seek to trace and to express, giving to it a name of its own, Religiosity. It is that which he has in common with Dante and all true religionists of everywhere and of everywhen. Old Herodotus was largely right in thinking that Homer made the Greek Theogony, that is, constructed or rather reconstructed the system of the Olympian Gods, and transmitted it through his poem as the established Pantheon of Hellas.

The poet, however, had to evolve in himself this stage of Religiosity, hence we seek to glimpse some trace of its presence as it arose along his ever-unfolding life-line. A few fleeting intimations we have lain in wait for, when he would seem to be more personal about himself. Hence we have reached the opinion that the young Homer, in his early Thessalian days, with his Olympian environment of nature, must have gone through a very deep-searching religious experience, for the vestiges of it are mightily stamped upon certain utterances of his *Iliad*. So it results that the general charac-

ter of this cardinal, life-determining experience can be felt and consciously assimilated by the congenial reader. Here at the start it may be definitely stated thus: the poet's strong and at times decidedly polemical affirmation of the divine supremacy of Zeus over the other Greek Gods, that is, his monotheistic jurisdiction. These Olympian underlings repeatedly challenge his sovereignty, and even conspire secretly against him as a recent usurper. Evidently the unity of the Hellenic God-world was still a somewhat unsettled problem in the time of Homer, who recurs to it again and again, and makes his Zeus re-assert it upon occasion with an actual display and threat of physical violence against his opponents on Olympus. From the first book of the *Iliad* to its last run these vehement menaces of the supreme God launched at his foes belonging to his own Olympian household. And in general his minatory words are the strongest in the poem, verily spoken thunderbolts, which he alone can forge in his Godhood's smithy and hurl against the offender. Very significant is it that the final appeal of all conflicts, human and divine, Trojan and Olympian, is carried up to the judgment seat of Zeus (see especially Book V of the *Iliad*).

Evidently the poet herein shows himself an ardent, and very determined supporter, yea protagonist of an unitary monotheism, against the prevalent separative, discordant, combative polytheism of the ordinary Greek religious consciousness. With true instinct he feels and in his imag-

inative way declares that there is one Supreme Father, one sovereign principle of the Universe. At the same time he does not propose to destroy these many recalcitrant lesser divinities, but he will adopt them into his family, domesticate them and harmonize their strifes as far as possible. It is, therefore, a great mistake to deem Homer a pure polytheist; the whole underlying trend of the *Iliad* is monotheistic, in the sense of acclaiming one overruling Godhood. It is true that this Homeric is not our familiar Mosaic monotheism, which commands "thou shalt have no other Gods before me," and then obliterates all divine association, "for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God." Thus the Greek and the Oriental are antagonistic primarily in their God-consciousness, even when both may be deemed monotheists.

It is not too much to say, then, that the *Iliad*, despite its divine feuds above and bloody warfare below, is a great religious document for its people, and indeed for the race, when we reach down and commune with its deepest spirit. We may well conceive that before Homer's time all Hellas was split to fragments in its multifarious worship, each locality in fact tended to have its own separate deity different from and often hostile to the rest. Thus entire Greece became a vast reservoir of discordant mutually combating Nature-Gods, Giants, Titans, Chimeras dire, whom Zeus has had to put down and to whelm into gloomy Tartarus. Still these hoary monstrous, pre-Olympian shapes rise up now and

then into the stream of the *Iliad*, and show themselves in contrast to the present established Homeric order with its beautiful humanized forms of Olympian Godhood. We hear of portentous Briareus the hundred handed, once summoned to assist Zeus from the dark Underworld where also dwell the uncanny Erinnyes ready to be called above in an emergency, and the snaky-tressed Gorgon whose sight turns the looker to stone, and other dungeoned horribilities. Ancient Hesiod some time after Homer, in a desperate fit of literary pessimism, will summon these monsters out of chaos again, and chant them into his unmelodious hexametal writ. But Olympian Homer keeps them submerged in his sunless Netherdom, from which however, he lets them peep forth once in a while with a dreadful eye-shot at his startled reader.

Perhaps it will sound strange to call Homer a great religious reformer of his people; but such he is and has to be in the deepest strain of his being. As before remarked, the strongest stress of his spirit he puts upon the unification of the Greek Pantheon, which has hitherto been a scattered, contradictory, self-undoing Polytheon. Homer has felt the supreme need of the one God in himself and also in his folk, as well as in his world-order. This is his deep religious experience, and it has also become a conviction which can be felt pulsing through many a scene of both his poems. No sympathetic reader will ever forget that warm worshipful line of the *Odyssey*: "All men have need of

God''—the original surprisingly says *God* in the singular, not *Gods* polytheistically.

Thus we seek to fetch to the fore in our task this much neglected strand of Homeric interpretation, which we call the poet's Religiosity, stressing it as a salient fact of his spirit's biography. In fact it may be said that there is no poetry in literature more directly and spontaneously religious than that of Homer. Usually the complaint is heard that he makes the Gods interfere too easily and frequently in human affairs on the plains of Troy. Of course we cannot adopt to-day Homer's particular form of faith: we cannot give a sacrifice to Athena, or breathe a supplication to Apollo, or offer a hecatomb to Zeus. Homer's ritual is gone, being a finite matter anyhow, but Homer's religiosity is or ought to be with us still, being his immortal portion and eternal in itself. The parent to-day will hardly invoke "Zeus and all the Gods" in fervent petition for his son, as Hector did for his infant boy Astyanax; but the modern father cannot help echoing here and now the spirit of that old Hero praying on the walls of Troy: "May it be said of this son of mine that he is a much better man than his father."

Thus Homer can be often felt rising out of the formulas, rites, and litanies of his special religious service into the realm of universal religion, good for all times and places and peoples. We hold that just this has been one of the chief preservatives of Homer's poetry for thirty centuries, and one of

the world's supreme trainers to the greatness and lastingness of Greek spirit. In contrast with his formal religion, which has long since vanished, we here emphasize this universal element ever peering forth out of his particular ceremonial as his Religiosity.

V.

HOMER'S ZEUS.

If Homer, then, was essentially the maker and the organizer of the Greek Olympian realm of the Gods, its sovereign Zeus may well be acclaimed his greatest impersonation. For the poet in such a creative act must summon before himself the governing power of the Universe, embody it in shape and set it to functioning, at least ideally, in his poem. The height of all human originality must be that which can adequately re-originate man's own originator and his world's, in forms that endure.

Now such a divine creation (or re-creation) must have been the fundamental problem of the time and people, which the poet had to grapple with and to express for his age's uplift and adoration. As the two grandest utterances of the religious spirit of the Earth's two leading cultural races, Aryan and Semitic, it is possible to bring together in our contemplation the Greek Zeus and the Hebrew Jahveh. (See the conceived visit of David the Psalmist of Israel with Homer in Chios—which visit is described on page 175 of this book.)

Zeus is distinctly represented by Homer as the all-determining God over both contestants, the Greeks and the Trojans; he is shown supporting one side or the other according as its action agrees with his conception of eternal right. So the Homeric Zeus, in his repeated changes of favor from Greek to Trojan and back again, remains ethically consistent with himself, as far as the war is concerned. Thus the poet portrays him as the presiding Genius of History supereminent above both the terrestrial antagonists down below on the plains of Troy, and thus bringing forth through them his own divine end. Olympian Zeus in the *Iliad* is the poet's apotheosis of the World-Spirit.

Out of the forty-eight Books which make up the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, according to the division of them ascribed usually to the old Alexandrian grammarian Zenodotus, there is one Book which is especially devoted to the assertion and proof of the divine sovereignty of Zeus. This is the somewhat neglected and relatively unappreciated Book Eighth of the *Iliad*. It expresses in its imaginative way, and affirms with all the emphasis of Heaven's thunder and lightning, the divine supremacy of the Olympian Father of Gods and Men. Thus we may well deem it Homer's declaration of the prime article of his religious faith; his creed it might be technically called, being formulated not in abstract dogma, but fulminated forth in colossal bursts of poetry, responsive to the magnitude of the thought and its omnipotent thinker, as well as

to the Olympian setting of its scenery. The whole is told with a sublimity which shows the poet in his loftiest mood, world-storming in his massive energy of expression. Homer, then, we may hearken here voicing his earlier mountainous conception of the one over-ruling, world-governing Personality.

Let us first feel the might of the preluding words. The Gods are met on Olympus in council; there is a deep bitter scission between them on the question of helping Troy. Zeus presides, and in words which drop from his mouth with the force of a sledge-stroke, he lays down the law to all the different deities there assembled, male and female. "None of you are to give divine aid to Greek or Trojan in the forthcoming battle; otherwise the aggressor will be scourged disgracefully back to Olympus", or whelmed to yet greater punishment: "I having seized him shall hurl him down into Tartarus", the dark abode of old divine disobedience. Zeus even challenges them to a test of his strength: "Come, ye Gods, make trial of me, all of you" that you may find out "how much I am above Gods and above men." Very superlative does all this sound; no wonder that they are said to have shrunk back in silence, marveling at the word, "for he spoke very mightily", uprisen with a mountainous majesty.

Next the poet brings before us the world-governing Zeus asserting his power and sovereignty over mortals. The supreme God now speeds in his char-

iot from Olympus over the sea to Mount Ida where, perched on the top of Gargaros he can behold the battle below on the Trojan plain, through which contest he is to bring defeat to the Greeks till they become reconciled with their estranged hero Achilles. And the God makes known his awful presence and his intention in this way: "He thundered mightily from Ida, and hurled his blazing flash amid the Achæan host, who seeing it startled, and pale-green terror seized them all." Such is the God's first announcement of himself and his warning; wise old Nestor sees the sign and proclaims its meaning to the Greek fellow-soldier at his side: "Dost thou not recognize that help no longer comes from Zeus? Now doth he, the son of Cronus, vouchsafe victory to Hector; no man, however great, can thwart the will of Zeus; verily the Deity is much the mightier."

Thus God and Man, above on Olympus and below on Earth, have proclaimed with awe Zeus as the all-powerful sovereign both of the God-world and of the Man-world. But the poet is aware that this overwhelming display of purely external might is not the whole, or perhaps not the best of his supreme Divinity. Accordingly he turns inward and gives us a glimpse into the soul of Zeus during the present Olympian struggle, showing us what is the spiritual condition of the uppermost God himself in such a strife. So we interpret the essential meaning of the much-discussed image of the golden balance or pair of scales which Zeus holds aloft,

and in which he weighs the destinies of the two wavering sides, "the horse-taming Trojans and the bronze-mailed Achaeans." That is, the supreme Power of the Universe is represented as deliberating (word from *libra*, a pair of scales) upon the two grand colliding principles there before him on the plains of Troy. And well he may *librate* internally, for in his will are combating two contradictory functions. Shall it be victory for the Trojans to-day, and then victory for the Greeks to-morrow? But behold! the God breaks soon his inner equilibrium, and passes from deliberation to resolution: Troy's hero Hector is to conquer now, in accord with the highest God's Olympian promise to Thetis, mother of the wronged Achilles. But hereafter the triumphant turn of the Greeks will come, when they have endured their spirit-testing discipline of defeat.

Colossal and far-suggesting is this image of divine deliberation at a pivotal turn in the grand enterprise of Hellas. The stupendous picture of Zeus holding up in heaven his golden balance and weighing the cardinal event of the age or of the ages, has captured the imagination of the vast army of readers since the poet first dashed it off with such vividness and soul-stretching significance. What if victorious Hector had taken the new wall, pushed the cowed Greeks into their ships, and driven them to retreat whipped homeward across the sea? Would there have been any Marathon, any Periclean Athens, indeed any Europe except

as a spiritual appendix to the Orient, which it is still on certain lines, especially in the matter of religion? So we dare think that the best reader of Homer will rise to the conception of the poet here forefeeling and foreshadowing in little Troy a great, perchance the greatest event of the World's History, which is now at one of its decisive nodes, when Providence sits in judgment and renders the decision. Such we may construe, at its present conjuncture, the sovereignty of Zeus in its farthest outreach into futurity.

Thus on the Olympian height Zeus in his supremacy is represented as weighing the two opposing Fates of the time's grand issue, or, as we construe them, the two colliding Folk-souls, Trojan and Greek, the one belonging more to the East, the other more to the West. The act calls up yet another question of prime importance in the study of Homer, which we may put briefly in this fashion: Is Zeus above Fate or Fate above Zeus, in the Homeric conception? The problem often recurs, and undoubtedly is one with which the poet had some of his deepest and hardest spiritual wrestles. And the antinomy is still alive to-day, being often named now the fight between the Necessitarians and the Libertarians. In the present case Zeus evidently picks up the two Fates somewhere, weighs them, and then decides, which decision, however, is one that he has taken already, for the poet has told us so in the First Book of the *Iliad*. But here he re-affirms his resolution before the Council of all

the Gods, who are now to hear this grandest assertion of his sovereignty, along with the penalty for disobedience.

It is true that Homer, in some passages of his poems, does not proclaim so distinctly the supremacy of his supreme God over Fate. It would almost seem as if the poet at times had his doubts about the matter. Hence some expositors, possibly of an original Calvinistic bent, have sought to show that Homer believed even in the divinity of predestination, that he was indeed a good old-school Presbyterian (once I heard these very words applied to the hoary heathen bard in a Homer class which I was teaching). Evidently the poet does not and cannot always speak at his topmost power; ancient is the word that the good Homer nods now and then; he relaxes, turns sleepy, and in such a mood suffers dark impersonal Fate to get the better of his almighty personal Zeus and of himself. Still in his highest vision Homer reveals not a Fate-governed but a Zeus-governed world, despite his temporary lapses. At his best he is and sings the Fate-compeller.

Here it should be noted that antique Greece, in the course of her history, will gradually droop from this exalted standpoint of her first and greatest poet. The Athenian tragedians on the whole represent the free Hellenic Soul as tragic, though generally after an heroic struggle with its fateful limits. Aeschylus in his Prometheus gives the new Attic version of the old Homeric conflict against

Olympian Zeus, who has now to chain his Titanic opponent to Mount Caucasus, seemingly, however, only for a time. Sophocles, the most typical tragedian of autonomous Hellas, though probably not her greatest, portrays two profoundly representative characters in two different dramas under the single name of Oedipus—the one desperately fated, the other apparently unfated. But when Hellas had lost her freedom, being enslaved to external powers, first to Macedon and then to Rome, she felt in the deepest pulse of her being that not only she herself but that her Gods were tragic, being completely overwhelmed by the dark ever-threatening Fate which Homer's Zeus had also known, yet which he had met and put down in his divine supremacy. This tragedy of enslaved Hellas in the grip of her final Fate is presented with all its pathos by that masterpiece of later Greek art, the Laocoon group of sculpture, of which the frantic face of fated father Laocoon is supposed to be modeled after the serene face of triumphant Father Zeus of Phidias. Thus deeply interwoven through the changeful destinies of Grecian history for a thousand years is the primordial conflict of the Gods on Olympus, as here set forth by Homer.

But the Olympian struggle of the Eighth Book of the *Iliad* is not yet over. Hera (Juno) wife of Zeus, the bitter one-sided partisan of the Greeks, intrigues to involve Poseidon "the broad-bodied earth-shaking" God, in a contest with Zeus, but he warily replies: "I am not eager to see the rest

of us Olympians in a fight with the son of Cronus, for he is far mightier than all of us." Still when the Zeus-inspired Hector "with the eyes of Gorgon or man-devouring Mars" had driven the fleeing Greeks "through the palisades and over the foss" to their last refuge, Hera again sought to thwart the will of her omnipotent spouse, and to stay the irresistible fury of the God-frenzied Hector, lest the Greeks perish "at the onrush of one man." So smite the thunder-bolted words of the poet in one of his most fulminant moods—Titanic he becomes in the hurry and might of his utterance.

"The white-armed Goddess Hera", now thoroughly concerned for the safety of her Greeks, starts a fresh conspiracy with Athena against the dominance of Zeus. A very full and glowing picture of this new and dangerously domestic complot of the two Olympian Goddesses is dashed off by the poet with all his imaginative swiftness and luxuriance of lofty-worded energy. But this opposition to the will of Zeus turns out like the others; at the final scene Athena droops to her sulks in moody silence, while Hera still dares bristle up in petulant protest. But at her angry husband's ominous Olympian intimation, which threatens her with a journey to the uttermost bounds of earth and sea, where sit Cronus and Iapetus, hoary primordial anarchists beyond the rays of the sun, "to him then she made no reply."

Thus after these several successive attempts to breach the supremacy of the one Olympian God,

the authority of Zeus has completely triumphed. The previous recalcitrant multiplicity of the Greek Gods is brought not merely to silent submission, but to an organized unity which we may deem the grand religious reform of Homer, who also writes their Bible for his Greek people. And this reform with its Bible remains the permanent fact of the Hellenic God-consciousness, till it vanishes into Christendom. So we designate this Eighth Book of the *Iliad* distinctively as Homer's Book of Zeus, whose divine sovereignty he here celebrates in all the grandiose pomp of his exalted mountainous poetry. Of course the assertion of the Olympian supremacy of Zeus winds through and unites the whole *Iliad*, of which immediately the first Book interlinks through Zeus with the last, both Books introducing him as the sovereign determiner of destinies divine and human, which are set forth in the whole sweep of the poem.

Finally we wish in this same Olympian record to catch some glimpse of the poet's selfhood, and of the present stage of his poetic development. The wrath of Zeus against the rebellious deities may well be taken to reflect Homer's fierce conflict with the hostile polytheism of his time. He is here still in his earlier Thessalian period, during which the landscape of Olympus with its mountainous imagery and supereminent God-world is stamped upon his brain-stretching conception and sonorous utterance. Hence this Eighth Book shows itself peculiarly Olympian in word and thought, since its

content is the poet's confession of faith or doctrinal creed expressed in all the grandeur of his sublime environment. And we are not to forget that this enormous energy of feeling and expression is called forth by his battle with the transmitted polytheism of the past. Thus Homer, especially the present younger Homer, has gone through in his experience his own desperate fight with prescription; he, like so many junior poets after him, has had his primal break with tradition, his negative controversial spell, out of which, however, he is to rise into his higher constructive work.

We need not approve of everything of which Zeus does and says in his colossal sense-life, for he is divinely passional also; still the conception and fulfilment of his universal personality make him the sublimest creation of Homer. For us he remains to-day the most poetic presentment of the World-Spirit in all Literature, yea the truest from certain viewpoints. In our American Civil War, and even in the recent World War, did not the Providence of History punish (we may call it) with defeat and untold calamity his people, till they were made ready to do the right thing through such discipline, and thus to deserve the victory which he finally gave them? Quite in the same manner we behold Zeus, the over-ruling Hellenic God, disciplining in the *Iliad* his folk at Troy. Can we not glimpse from his book, even in dreamy outline, what was the training of the poet for such a monumental achievement?

VI.

HOMER IN SMYRNA.

More intimately connected with Smyrna is Homer than with any other Greek locality. Repeatedly in the preceding account we have brought together the poet and his city—their conjunction reaching from to-day up to an undated antiquity. A visit to Smyrna at the present time is for the classical enthusiast a visit to the presence of Homer.

The composition of the *Iliad*, as we believe, finds its fittest setting in and around Smyrna, which did not exist during the Trojan War, but was a colony of the great Greek migration to the Anatolian coast after the fall of Troy. Homer is conjectured to have been one of these migrants from Northern Hellas, probably by way of Athens, which city was the center of the Ionic movement Eastward across the sea. Without question these statements are chiefly inferences derived from brief passing allusions mainly in the *Iliad*, through whose diversified scenes, however, we have already traced three distinct steps in the present evolution of the poet.

Of the Achillean Homer, then, as we designate him in this period of his biography, we here recapitulate the stages. (1) The Northern, Thessalian, Olympian youth who reflects the impress of his earliest environment in his poem. (2) The migrating adventurer over the Egean to Asia Minor, where he had to become for a time the soldier

fighting against the Oriental. This gave him his direct personal experience of warfare, which he knows and shows in all its details throughout his descriptions of combat on the plain of Troy. Of course he was not an eye-witness of the old Trojan conflict of Priam's age, he was too late for that; but he did see and participate in the similar struggle along the Asiatic border, for it was still kept up in his time, and indeed has never ceased except at intervals, inasmuch as it is going on to-day more vigorously than ever. Napoleon, the best military judge, reading the *Iliad*, affirmed the distinctive soldiership of Homer, who manifests in his make-up a pronounced strain of the fighter's delight in battle, the native *gaudium certaminis*. But also he as poet emphasizes its ethical suppression just in the career of his most pugnacious Hero Achilles, who becomes reconciled and ends his warlike exploits in a truce. (3) This placated strain in the poem and in the man brings us to Homer's Smyranean days of repose and retrospection, when he, gathering up in peace the haps and mishaps of his own foregone life, and looking backward possibly two hundred years in imagination to the Trojan aforetime, projected his experiences into a famous mythical past, as so many other poets have done since. Accordingly, the claim is made that Homer, having reached his full middle-age, and having settled down for a while in quiet at Smyrna amid a congenial environment for his work, composed his *Iliad* about as we have it now, elaborating

and organizing all the forementioned stages, which he has passed through in his own career, and then embodied in the story of his Hero Achilles. Of course this view quite abolishes the ancient redaction of Pisistratus, as well as the modern Wolfian theory in all its ramifications.

Now it is incumbent upon the propounder of such hardy Homeric heterodoxy to bolster it with every corroborating incident which can be culled out of the poet's words. It is true Smyrna is not mentioned by Homer, for what seems a good artistic reason: the city probably did not yet exist, certainly had not yet bloomed, in the age of the Trojan War of which he sings. Still it can be seen to be the most favorable spot for the poet's task, from the hints scattered through his book. Indeed antiquity already had selected Smyrna as the right Homeric center, from whose outlook the man is to be viewed and unfolded in his work and in himself. So we shall bring before ourselves the main propitious circumstances which could prompt Homer in Smyrna to his poetic creativity.

I. The first and most significant fact which is to be stressed here at the start, is that Smyrna itself in its history and character is a reconciled city, reconciled after a bitter prolonged tribal feud, thus resembling both the poet and his poem. For Smyrna is known to have been made up of two diverse kinds of Greek population, which after much strife were harmonized and dwelt together in civic peace spiced of course with some strife. Its

first colonists were Aeolic and belonged for the most part to Northern Greece; but the Ionians who settled on the Southern border of Aeolis, seized Smyrna furtively and would make it Ionic, doubtless incorporating with themselves a large part of its former citizens. Such a two-foldness or divided origin in its inhabitants gave to Smyrna its peculiar character among the Greek cities, being Eolo-Ionic in quite all that it was or did, or even said, for its speech seemingly was a composite of its two tribal dialects. Hence it comes that Homer's epic tongue is called Eolo-Ionic, being sprung unquestionably from this double language of Smyrna, for he could not have found it any where else in Anatolia or in the whole Greek world. Thus the poet's very vocables singing from his vocal chords, constitute a kind of mediated or reconciled dialect, doubtless reflecting the general character of those who made it and used it in daily intercourse.

Moreover it should be observed that the Northern and Southern elements of Hellas, which we have already seen playing such an important part in the fallings-out and makings-up of the Greek host before Troy, find their respective representatives in the two tribal ingredients of Smyrna, as the Aeolic belonged more to the North and the Ionic more to the South. Hence some burning examples of the quarrel between Thessalian Achilles and Achaean Agamemnon the poet could have witnessed on the streets of Smyrna many a time and oft. And also it is conceivable that he saw the quarrel

reconciled, or rather he would naturally have become the chief reconciler himself, so that he in real life uttered his nobly soothing exhortations to placability put into the mouth of Phoenix, who in the *Iliad* addresses them to the angry unreconciled Hero.

Thus the Eolo-Ionic city must have lived a sort of compromise and continuous mutual placation, which was imprinted upon the actual words of its people and its poet. But having thus mediated its inner conflict, doubtless with occasional relapses into the old strife-ful dualism, Smyrna will be compelled to face her intenser and much larger outer conflict.

II. This is the cardinal, enduring, and ever-enlarging struggle between Greece and the Orient, whose battle-line lay not so very far Eastward from Smyrna's city-limits. Already in our previous notice of the Trojan War, this its basic significance has been duly emphasized in detail. Those old Greeks fighting at Troy were united not so much by the special case of dubious Helen as by the feeling, quite unconscious, that their national destiny was at stake. Evidently Northern Hellas, as we may catch from the words of Achilles, was not particularly aglow for the restoration of the uncertainly stolen woman of the South. And on the other side, the allies of Troy would be still less able to feel much enthusiasm in the fight to uphold the rape of the Spartan wife by Trojan Paris, whose deed was denounced openly in Troy by his

own brother Hector. We are not to forget that these auxiliaries of Ilium extended from Thrace on the North to Lycia far to the South. Not much is told about them, but evidently they regarded the Trojan cause as their own, seeing or feeling in it some principle deeper and more compelling than Troy's questionable detention of Helen. They were Orientals, and had their own world-view, however crude and primitive, for which they were forward to fight in opposition to the dawning new civilisation of Hellas, which they already felt to be hostile to their own. And so they still feel and fight to-day, as we try to make our reader never forget, recalling to him Time's best and most eternal commentary on the *Iliad*.

Now into this earlier mythical account, History begins to interweave its later and more authentic record. Herodotus, the true successor, and in many respects the most suggestive interpreter of Homer, opens his great work with the manifold conflicts between these colonies of the Anatolian coast and the Oriental or Orientalizing peoples of the interior country. That is, the grand collision between Hellas and Asia has advanced, or rather is just advancing, out of the Mythus of the poet into the Prose of the historian on whose pages Smyrna now appears. Moreover the protagonists of the opposing sides have not a little changed; instead of the Trojans we find in Herodotus the Lydians as the first historic upholders of the Oriental tendency; and instead of the continental Greeks, their col-

onists in Asia Minor have to fight for the Hellenic inheritance against Lydia, of which country the name is not mentioned in Homer.

There can be hardly any just doubt that the poet lived in the midst of this Greek conflict with the earlier Lydian monarchs, who reach quite back to hazy tradition. He fought in it, obtained his vivid experience of war from it, and saw in it a further development of the persistent conflict between Greece and Asia which had already started centuries before on the plains of Troy. He suppressed all mention of Lydia in his poem, doubtless with design, possibly alluding to it under the name of Maeonia. Indeed Homer himself was sometimes called, or it may be nicknamed Maeonides.

A later account, not mentioned by Herodotus, strikingly indicates the bitterness of this early Greco-Lydian conflict, stating that Smyrna was finally captured by the Lydian King Alyattes, father of Croesus, somewhere about 600 B. C., hence several centuries after Homer's time. But such was the prolonged furiously destructive animosity between the two contestants that the city was completely wrecked, and lay deserted and in ruins like Troy for four hundred years, when it was rebuilt some time during the Greek domination of Asia, of which it was evidently a kind of triumphal memorial. All this, however, is denied by Mr. Grote and others. Still Smyrna endures to-day in the same locality and in the same hate, engaged in the

same old Trojan and Lydian warfare, with the old battle-line over against it now manned by the Turks.

Of course the poet, according to wont, projected back into the mythical past of Troy his present real experience of Smyrna. Why should he select that antique Trojan Mythus for the framework of his world-constructing conception of the *Iliad*? Such a choice, most important for his vast poetic enterprise, is deeply indeed creatively connected with his stay at Smyrna. Of this significant fact pertaining to Homer's first poetic activity, something relevant can be next adduced.

III. Smyrna was the natural center for the rise, growth, and complete efflorescence of the Mythus of Troy, whose battle-field lay not so very far-off up the coast-line in the so-called Troad. Moreover the Trojan fight was essentially that of Smyrna herself, who had to keep it up long after the fall of Ilium. The Lydian king had taken the place of Priam, and the Greek war-front now embraced the whole row of colonies, Aeolic, Ionic, Doric strwn along the Anatolian coast, all of which were in a perpetual struggle with the Asiatic peoples of the interior. Smyrna by its position and character, was the earlier protagonist in this struggle; but when she weakened and was captured, the Greek colonial headship fell to the stronger Miletus, which city also was finally conquered by the Lydian king Croesus.

But from Troy's fall till Homer's stay at Smyrna

some centuries had elapsed, let us say provisionally two hundred years, for no exact count can be made. During this considerable onflow of time, the Hellenic mind, the most self-recording that ever existed, was busy with telling about itself, especially where and with what it was most fully and tensely at work. Its form of self-expression, in the present stage of its development, was what it called in its own speech mythopoeic; that is, it uttered itself mythically. Hence this was the creative epoch of Greek Mythology, which still maintains its cultural worth in art and poetry, and even in education.

But the special shape which the Greek Mythus took at Smyrna and everywhere in the Anatolian colonies, then the most progressive and creative part of total Hellas, was the tale of Troy, since this expressed the most immediate, intimate, and trying experience of their exposed daily life. They were all still fighting the Trojan War in Homer's time two centuries afterward, and, let the reader keep re-thinking, they are fighting it just now. The bards sang the song of Troy to the listening folk in the city's market-place, and it could be heard in the onset of battle against the Lydian or other Oriental foe. Thus had arisen a considerable body of popular poetry in and around Smyrna, and doubtless in other places. A vast incoherent, unorganized mass of seething versicles we may well conceive such a product, yet surging directly from the heart of people in its deepest pulsations over its ever-lowering crisis.

Now amid such a tumultuous riot of song appears the great poetical organizer, Homer, who seizes the wriggling congeries of spontaneous lays, and brings order and organisation into this primeval chaos of poetry. He constructs and unifies out of these uncouth refractory materials the one great Mythos of Troy, building it into his *Iliad*, which catches also the near-by musical sea-roll of the Egean in its buoyant hexameters. Thus Homer at Smyrna, in one supreme deed of creation, may be acclaimed the maker (*poietes*) of the Greek language, mythology, poetry, and religion, forming or re-forming them out of their pre-existent protoplasmic elements spouting up sporadically everywhere from the early formless Greek folk-soul. Such is his unique poetic achievement there on this Eolo-Ionic border, seemingly without parallel in the World's History. Even his name *Homer* as already indicated, suggests his true character as the organizer, the unifier, the bringer-together, according to its best derivation. Here we should not fail to note that the modern school of Wolf and his disciples have had as their chief object to assail and to undo just this supreme architectonic achievement of Homer's genius, wrecking his classic temple of song into its original scattered lays, seeking to dissolve his finished poetic organism into its primordial atoms.

IV. But did not Homer have his rivals, his fellow-poets, his group of competitive singers, of whom he was the chief? At Smyrna there must

have been in his time a notable upburst of mythical activity expressing itself in story and song. Homer stood not alone in composing his *Iliad*; rather was he the outcome and culminant efflorescence of a great poetic movement. Yet no record of any such occurrence has come down to us; no name of his next best compeer have we ever heard, or has the poet himself mentioned in his book. Still we have to think that the Mythus of Troy continued a long time in flower, and produced many poets before Homer, as it failed not to do after him; he was the pinnacle as well as the all-containing edifice of the age's poetic architecture.

So it comes that the Mythus of Troy, effervescing thus deeply and continuously in the heart of the people, could not help bubbling up into many a lay little and large, of more or less worth. So we conceive naturally of a stimulating poetic environment around the supreme poet in his Smyrnaean home.

We are led to the same view by what we know historically of the other World-Poets, who present a similar situation. Young Dante at Florence was surrounded and encouraged by a group of versifiers like himself, who gave him a certain urge and training, but whom he so utterly outstripped that he has been able to preserve their names from oblivion. In like manner Shakespeare rose and flourished mid a cluster of lesser dramatists, most of whom to-day are illumined chiefly through his lamp. And young Goethe grew up in a set of young poets who partook of the same stormy outbreak of song. But of

Homer's poetic comrades we have no information, and yet we feel from his words and his circumstances that such a group must have existed. The *Iliad* has little to say of the Homeric singer, but the *Odyssey* tells us much about him, giving many details of his calling which must have come mainly from the poet's own experiences at Smyrna. The bards Phemius, Demodocus, yea the singing Ulysses himself poetizing his own adventures in Fableland (*Odyssey* Books IX-XII), presuppose a knowledge, a discipline, and an inspiration which could hardly be obtained otherwhence than from a traditional guild of poets, natural conservators and promulgators of past poetic excellence, as well as of their own. Indeed we shall find that persistent fame, streaming down through hoar antiquity, possibly from the man in person, has kept alive the whispered word that Homer himself in his old-age, returning from his travels, established a guild or school of poets in the island of Chios, neighbor to Smyrna on the mainland. Whereof something more is to be set forth in a later part of this Homeric essay.

At present, however, there rises before us another insistent interrogation: what was the setting of nature at and around Smyrna for the poet—what traces of his physical environment can we find in his poem? For that locality too must have left its marks upon the middle-aged man and his work, just as the Olympian scenery had once stamped ineffaceably its impress upon the imagination of the youth.

V. Let the most salient point connecting the landscape of Smyrna with the poet be cited at the start. It occurs in the passage where Achilles, being not merely reconciled but sympathetic with his arch foe, King Priam, consoles the heart-broken father for the loss of Hector whom he himself has slain and maltreated in death: "Here, old man, thy son lies ransomed on his couch. And now let us bethink ourselves of repast, for even fair-haired Niobe did not forget her food on the very day when her twelve children, six sons and six daughters, were slain. . . . Yonder now she, amid the rocks and solitary hills, is sitting on Mount Sipylus, where she, though turned to a stone, is digesting (*pesssei*) her calamities sent of the Gods." (*Iliad* XXIV, 600-617.) Such are the deeply pathetic words which the finally transformed Achilles utters in his tent at Troy to his royal foe at his knees—one of the most Homeric passages of all Homer though slashed out by certain recent critics, German and English.

And now the questful reader is to conceive the imaginative poet in his tent or cottage on his hillock at or near Smyrna, where he could see looming in the horizon the fore-mentioned Mount Sipylus which belonged to Smyrna's landscape, not at all to Troy's, and which ever held up before the city the fatuous Niobe weeping for her children. At such view he put his most affecting passage into the mouth of his new-born Hero, who no longer slays but tenderly comforts his chief enemy, yea will pro-

tect the latter against danger from Agamemnon and other Greeks near at hand. And to Sipylus Homer seems to annex a rivulet under the name of Achelous (word probably related to Achilles), which name is taken from the mightiest river of continental Greece flowing down from the Northern homelands of the poet and his hero.

The story of Niobe has fascinated the creative imagination of the ages since Homer. The long line of Greek poets employed it in one way or other after him; indeed it became a kind of image or symbol of fateful tragic Hellas herself, so often bereaved in the course of her long history through her insolence against the Gods. And Niobe must be bowing her head and weeping over her Smyrna this very morning (September 16, 1922) in the greatest tragedy of her thousands of years.

But the loftiest most compelling expression of the legend is found in plastic Art, which has transmitted to the present time the famous Niobe group, often supposed to be the work of the sculptor Scopas (somewhat after 400 B. C.). Thus Homer's poetic look upon Sipylus from Smyrna has begotten a steady stream of artistic children down the centuries, and has shown itself far more prolific than boastful Niobe. But the biographic point for us now is that we catch a look at Homer writing his Iliad at Smyrna in view of Mount Sipylus, which he transfers in his poetic fervor to the Trojan landscape.

Antiquity has testified to the actual petrified fe-

male shape formed from a mountain which hung its head and shed tears in apparent grief just behind Smyrna. Pausanias, Greek traveler and author of an ancient guide-book of Hellas (he flourished probably a little after 100 A. D.) tells of his trip to inspect this unique colossal figure of stone: "I myself saw this Niobe, having ascended Mount Sipylus; from near at hand it is simply a steep rock, without human outline. But when you get at some distance from it, you will seem to behold a woman downcast and shedding tears." (I, 21, 3). Some recent archaeologists have conjectured that the mountainous image is the work of that uncertain, still very crepuscular people lately resurrected as the Hittites.

Such is the most striking and characteristic instance of Homer's employment of the Smyrnaean landscape, indicating the familiar eye-witness of the thing described. Moreover the poet has made the scene from nature take his immediate mood, which is that of sorrow at calamity, resignation to the will of the Gods, and placability. Thus the physical environment of Smyrna mirrors what we have designated as the third stage of Achilles and of his poet.

Far more fully, however, and variously pictured is the landscape of the Troad in the poem. But this landscape is more or less destructively mooded by the poet, who is here the fighter, the assailant, the destroyer. Troy, her walls, her rivers, her mountains, are given a hostile appearance, and take the

look of opposing the invaders of their territory. Trojan nature is of course the foe of the Greek army, and poetically reflects the Trojan spirit as well as the people of Troy. What a valiant divine fight is made by the River Scamander flowing through Troy's plain, as its surges foam up angrily and overwhelm even the God-defiant Greek Hero Achilles, making him flee and pray for death rather than meet it! (*Iliad* XXI.)

Still different from both these was the Thessalian landscape, in which were reared the young Achilles, and doubtless the young Homer. Nature here assumed her exalted mountainous shape, and was portrayed by the poet in his enthusiastic Olympian mood, which conceived and enthroned Zeus and the Gods on high—all of which may be deemed his sublimest effort.

Thus the observant reader will find and feel in the total sweep of the *Iliad* the three internal stages of the evolution of the poet (as they have been already set forth) hinted sympathetically through the external shapes of Nature in the poem. For we have already traced him along with his hero living first mid the lofty scenery of Olympus, home of his God-world; then we have noted his belligerent mood in the hostile landscape of Troy, which culminates in the fighting river Scamander; finally at Smyrna in the figure of bowed and weeping Mount Sipylus is imaged his new spirit of sympathy and placability, when he even throbs condolence with his bereaved foe. So we are to observe

that the poet makes environing Nature with all her externality into a sensitive mirror reflecting his soul's innermost development.

Herewith that part of the poet's life which we have called the Achillean Homer has come to a close. It is the First Period of his entire career, which he has unfolded with so much imaginative power in the *Iliad*, ending his poem with complete pacification of his Hero, and of himself too. From that height he refuses to let his Achilles fall again, though later poets will start the hero to battle anew before the walls of Troy, where he is doomed to perish. Still such an end of him, though foretold, is kept out of the action of the *Iliad*.

But, though the career of Homeric Achilles is closed, that of his creator, the poet, is not; on the contrary the latter still evolves ahead, passing over into a wholly new sphere of development which we emphasize as the second grand Period of his life's evolution. Again no directly documented dates, localities, events, or only of the vaguest sort; still we have the writ, the *Odyssey*, in which we can follow the poet's free self in its inner transformations, quite divested of all the external trappings of the day's or the place's circumstance. Homer now cuts loose from Smyrna for reasons which we shall try to trace later. No longer the fighting Achilles fixed to one spot, but the wandering Ulysses in search of his right home and true self, does he seek to portray and to be henceforth.

So it comes that we cannot tell the day, the year,

or even the century, when Homer set out upon his middle life's journey whose experiences, outer and inner he is to hymn into hexametral harmony like to the measures of the Iliad. Such was his spirit's flight from his old past to his new future, the grand departure of his genius from what it had done to what it has yet to do. He is unwilling to grow aged and ossified in the one poem, however great. Such is the profound mental change which the sympathetic reader will feel when he follows in spirit the poet's transition from his Iliad to his Odyssey.

All-sidedly illuminating should be, we think, the comparison between the first World-Poet, Homer, and the last World-Poet, Goethe, at a similar supreme turn of their careers, which takes place at about the same time of their lives, though these be so many centuries apart. But first let us mark this difference: we know the day, the year, and the very hour when Goethe began his flight from the crushing environment of his official routine, and started on his race for his soul's liberation in Italy. He preludes his Italian Tour thus: "At three o'clock in the morning I stole out of Carlsbad, for otherwise I could not have gotten away from my friends. Having packed a suitcase and a knapsack, I sprang into the post-chaise on the third of September, 1786." He records that he had just reached thirty-eight years of age, when it had "become impossible to stay here any longer." So away he flees to the antique classic South for winning what he repeatedly calls his New Birth (*Palingene-*

sis). In a similar spirit and at a similar stage of his life Homer must have quit his worn-out Anatolian environment, and have traveled back to what was for him antique Hellas, "whose cities he saw and whose mind he knew." Of course he masks this pivotal experience of his life in the *Mythus* of the grand Trojan Returner Ulysses, which was just his native form of self-expression, while Goethe has narrated to us his classic journey in direct prose as well as mirrored it in poetry.

Nor will it be amiss to signal the parallel fact here that the other two World-Poets, Dante and Shakespeare, have taken similar journeys for a similar purpose at quite the same general time of life. Dante's flight from troubled Florence to Rome that he might witness Christendom's Jubilee at the century's turn in 1300, when he was thirty five years old, became an epochal event in the evolution of his great poem, for there and then he saw and realized in creative conception his *Mythus* of the Future State as the grand theme of his song (see our *Life of Dante* p. 263). And Shakespeare in numerous dramas gives evidence of a personal contact and acquaintance with Italy, whose cultural training and lore wind through his entire poetical career.

So in this matter as in not a few others, we find Homer illustrated and interpreted by the later World-Poets, truly the spiritual brothers and right reflectors of his genius. Again we are to recall that the sole biography of Homer lurks ideally in his

two poems, through whose strains, however, we may detect many real life-lines secretly winding, which are to be traced and illumined from the known events and crises of equally lofty poetic souls.

Now we are hopefully ready to enter upon the Second Period of this biography of the poet, which we shall call the Ulyssean Homer, whose life henceforth we have to construe as released from all real places and times and historic occurrences, and to sublimate into the pure movement of his spirit creating an ideal Space and Time which are the setting of his new poem.

CHAPTER SECOND.

THE ULYSSEAN HOMER.

Here then is to be emphasized the supreme transition in the poet's life, from his first hero Achilles to his second hero Ulysses; from his first great work the Iliad; to his second, the Odyssey; from the first Period of his biography to the one now to be unfolded, the second. This latter also, like the former, is a chronicle of his personal experience, projected into a mythical form and connected with the Tale of Troy.

The prime external fact of Homer's biography at this stage is his departure from Smyrna, where he had lived and wrought during a number of years not to be exactly counted. He has gotten his Trojan or rather his Anatolian experience, and has expressed it in his Iliad. Smyrna with its environment has given him all that it has to impart, or at least all that he wishes of it or can receive. Our belief is that he had come to feel a reaction against the incessant strife between the Greeks and Asiatics which that Eastern borderland was always fomenting. The Odyssey shows more than one sign of an inner recoil from the Trojan War, and certainly moves in the opposite direction, out of the East toward the West.

Moreover Homer could not help seeing that the conflict between Hellas and the Orient was still

unsettled, though Troy had fallen two hundred years already before his time. He perceived that the struggle was destined to be a long-lasting one, from which he, having recorded its one typical deed of Troy, had better henceforth avert his face. Then it was not difficult for him with his poetic seership to forecast that this frontier city of Smyrna would finally be conquered by some Lydian Monarch (as it was), and that all the Greek colonies of Asia Minor were in the end to pass under the yoke of the neighboring Oriental despots (which actually occurred, as the historian Herodotus has documented). In other words his prevision foretold him that his fair Hellenic Anatolia was fated, and that he would be fated with it unless he returned to European Hellas, which was the original home of himself and his folk. Such is the deepest undertone running through the *Odyssey*, and indicating how its hero Ulysses unfates himself by his flight from fallen Troy to his old Ithacan abode, thus revealing himself to be at his deepest the Fate-compeller. And the Ulyssean poet Homer mirrors his own case, we may well think, when he flees from doomed Smyrna and all Greek Anatolia back to his primeval stock in Europe, thereby escaping doom himself.

The *Odyssey*, however, does not conduct its hero to or through Northern Greece, the Olympian region where Homer was probably born and grew up till he migrated. Now the scenery is no longer mountainous, but largely marine; the seascape, of

which there is almost nothing in the *Iliad*, takes its place prominently alongside the landscape in the *Odyssey*, which poem thus becomes more completely Greek. For Greece herself, being both peninsular and insular almost everywhere, is made up of and determined by the land and the water in quite equal proportions. It is, therefore, likely that Homer first became acquainted with the full import of the sea in the life of Greece at Smyrna, which, as well as the other Greek cities along the Anatolian coast, lived on, with, and through the Egean. If Homer passed his youth in the mountain-walled Thessalian country (as we think he must) he would be naturally cut off from any great familiarity with the sea. Hence the *Iliad* has so much to say about horses, the chief product of Thessaly, and so little about ships. After some such manner we may account for the striking change from land to water in the two poems: the poet himself at sea-kissed Smyrna has won a new experience and love of the sea, which he as usual embodies in his new work.

Some time in the life of Homer, we have, therefore, to conceive him setting out from Smyrna and the Greek East, and starting on his voyage Westward across the Egean. For among his other attainments he has become an expert sailor at Smyrna, where every man had something to do with navigation. Thus the landman Homer has turned the seaman Homer and can compose his *Odyssey*, whose hero is primarily the adventurous navigator Ulysses.

The alert reader has doubtless already started the question: At what time of life did the poet make this great transition—how old was he when he sailed out of Smyrna for a new career in a new world? Let it be duly acknowledged again that there is no specially quotable proof of either his stay at Smyrna, as already recounted, or of his departure which is now affirmed. But some such inference lies in the very genesis and evolution of his two books, as well as of his own career and character. We can overhear the author telling on himself under the mask of his most strongly individualized personages of his poems. Watch their salient traits and see Homer in the soul of Achilles and then at a later time in the soul of Ulysses. Very different though they be, ultimately they will be seen to be two stages of one and the same unfolding mind or human intelligence.

So much we can here set down: when Homer quits Smyrna, passing out of his Achillean into his Ulyssean consciousness, he is no longer in his youth, but has reached what is known as man's middle-age. The day, the year, the century, of his embarkation cannot be dated, but his spirit's chronology is stamped on his book. From antiquity also floats down the saying that the *Odyssey* is the work of the poet's older, more tranquil years. In a general way we conceive that he must have been about the forties when he took this second pivotal step of his career, and bade good-bye to the land of his *Iliad* in which he had already foretold the

passing of the youthful hero Achilles, and had distinctly preluded the rise of the more intellectual Ulysses to the vacant place of poetic heroship. At any rate Homer appears to have taken flight from his old Smyrnaean environment to a new order at about the age when his brother world-poets of the later centuries made a similar lurch away from their confining cities—a co-incidence of which we have given some account on a previous page.

Already in the *Iliad*, especially in the earlier portions, Ulysses is marked distinctly as the coming man. The Second Book exalts him the true hero of that perilous crisis of the war when the forefighter Achilles has retired in wrath to his tent, and when the king Agamemnon cravenly declares that he is ready to give up the war and to flee back to Greece, and when the whole army makes a sudden panicky dash to launch their ships for home. It is Ulysses who flings himself into the breach, and saves the day and the cause, in striking contrast with the hero and the monarch, both of whom at the extreme pinch of danger are shown to be lacking in their function of highest leadership. Such is his supreme characteristic deed in the *Iliad*, prophetic we may forefeel it of his future. Then he performs other notable feats in the course of this poem. But in the *Odyssey* he is distinctly proclaimed as the final taker of Troy through his intelligence, after the *Iliad*'s hero Achilles had failed of its capture and fallen before its walls.

But just now we may reflect again upon this most

characteristic deed of Ulysses, which shows him in action the most determined, in mind the most intelligent and convinced supporter of the Hellenic side against Troy and the Orient. Later we shall try to find how he came to take such an attitude, which sprang from an intense conviction born of experience.

I.

THE HOMERIC RETURN.

Homer has a word which seems a favorite with him for expressing the chief movement and content of his *Odyssey*: it is his much-used vocable, the Return (*Nostos*). Not only does he set forth the Return of his special hero Ulysses, but he embraces in his poem essentially the Return of all the Greeks to their European homes after the fall of Troy. They once separated from continental Hellas for the grand enterprise of their people, and now they have remained away for ten years from family and state: how are they to get back outwardly and inwardly, and what will they find on their arrival? Is it at all likely that their affairs will be in the same condition as when they left? Or will their places as rulers, husbands, property-owners be challenged or perchance be filled, especially in that uncertain early state of society?

It is evident that Homer thought or came to think the Return from Troy to be more hazardous, more diversified in adventure, and more deeply destiny-laden for its participants than the Trojan

War itself. That is he came to think so in his riper years at Smyrna, when his *Iliad* was finished and transcended, and when he had heard in transmitted story and song the manifold fates of these Returners (as they may be called) throughout all Hellas. Indeed one reason for his quitting Smyrna and setting out on his travels was to listen to these various Returns of the Greek heroes as told in their native localities, and to choose the most significant ones for his new poem. The *Odyssey* shows everywhere some such collection of the legendary lore of the different countries of Greece. Homer, we must never forget, did not make his *Mythus*; that had to be the work of his folk, from whom he took it and organized it and transfigured it into his poem.

The *Odyssey*, then, calls itself in general the Return, which word, however, has in the poem several shades of meaning. Of course there was the outer Return over the uncertain sea, in whose storms some of the Returners perished, and so never reached their homeland. But the *Odyssey* places its chief stress upon the inner obstacles which lurked in the soul of the returning hero, and prevented him from getting back to his family and folk. For his long absence and also his habitual deeds of violence in war had moulded his character, so that it had become alien to the peaceful ways and pursuits of the society to which he was now coming back. Thus a deep spiritual estrangement from man's social institutions, especially from Family and State was the grand counterstroke which

fell upon the victors of the Trojan War. Some who did get back home in body found at their own hearth their tragic end, as did Agamemnon the leader of the Greeks and king of golden Mycenae, whose domestic and political fate sends a stream of terrors through ancient and modern literature till to-day.

Homer shows a distinct pedagogical aim in the account and the order of these Returns of the Greek conquerors from their Trojan victory. He seeks in them to impart the most important lesson of life, as conceived by him, to the youth Telemachus now taking a course of education which is laid down in the *Odyssey*, whereby it becomes one of the great educational books of the race. To be sure, Homer had no printed page, but the spoken word for imparting his instruction, or the chanted hexameter; still his whole *Odyssey* takes the form of a school-book for the training of a pupil, in which work the teacher shows himself certainly the most poetical of all schoolmasters. Hence too very naturally follows his final deed of opening an Homeric institute at Chios for teaching his young Homerids his two songs of Troy.

Very evident, then, it becomes that the poet has a lesson to impart in his *Odyssey*, which is not written merely to give pleasure, or to indulge in beautiful art for art's sake; it has an educative object which seeks to train its youth, and also a remedial purpose to rescue its hero and his people from the deadly repercussion which follows every long and

desperate war, and which smites spiritually even those who bring home glorious victory. This phase of the *Odyssey*, very pronounced to its watchful reader, ought to have its deepest appeal just to-day, when the nations, especially the victorious nations, are trying to get back from their World-War, but somehow cannot accomplish this grand Ulyssean adventure. Even we in America, for whom the task ought to be the easiest, are as yet wholly unable to restore ourselves to what has been called normalcy, to our established social and institutional order. To be sure, outwardly we have returned from Europe, from our destroyed Troy, if you will; but the inner return or spiritual restoration is yet to come. Our American Ulysses may still have to wander his ten years, meeting and passing through many tempests and temptations of the Ocean, wrestling with and overcoming the huge giants along the path of his voyage, the hostile Lestrigonians, having to face and to put down one-eyed hideous Polyphemus the anarchist, the atheist, the cannibal, not to speak of the more insidious, but equally destructive charms of Calypso and of Circe.

So the world may be said just now to be engaged in the Return of Ulysses, desperately struggling in the midst of what seems its worst crisis. Will he pull through, after destroying his destroyers, and finally reach "sunny Ithaca and prudent Penelope"? The *Odyssey* holds before us such an outlook, hence it can well be deemed a Great Book of Hope not only for its own Greek time, but like-

wise for our time, and for all time, veritably a Bible sent to the whole human race. Homer has composed it for us and also for himself, having poured into it his own deepest experiences of life, which he passed through after his war-song of the *Iliad*.

But we must remember that Ulysses is only one of these Greek Returners whose fates constitute the main theme of his poem. Noteworthy is the fact that the poet has set forth in considerable detail and with deep sympathy the characters of three successful Returners, not to mention now those whom he represents as perishing on the way. He evidently regarded these three cases as typical of the entire Hellenic host in its sweep homeward out of its grand separation and estrangement. As Homer may be here glimpsed in his workshop portraying and arranging in due order his heroes, we shall mark his procedure.

(1) The Return of Nestor was the easiest, least impeded by obstacles, wholly favored of the Gods with whom he kept himself in harmony through his religiosity. No storm overtook him on the sea and scattered his ships; and when he reached his home in sandy Pylos, he found it quite as he had left it—no suitors, no revolution, no inner spiritual alienation in his people or in himself. Thus Nestor represents the Return to the more innocent, idyllic, pre-Trojan time, without the profound questionings and upsettings caused by the World-War. This early stage of Hellas, upon which many years

before had fallen the grand disruption of the age and its struggle with the Orient, Telemachus is now to see and to assimilate as the first lesson in his education. The poet has told it with amplitude and tenderness in the Third Book of his poem. (The reader will find the foregoing points set forth more fully in our Commentary on the Odyssey.)

(2) The second grand Returner whom Homer paints in larger outline and with a philosophic profundity, though still poetic in form, is king Menelaus, whom student Telemachus likewise visits in the royal shining palace of Sparta, where he also looks upon and hears the beautiful, errant, but now restored Helen, the ostensible cause of that old World-War. (See this striking account in that most suggestive Fourth Book of the Odyssey.) Menelaus, however, did not come directly home; he had to return by way of the East and Egypt, where he receives the message of Proteus, the Old Man of the Sea, the deepest-thoughted utterance of the whole poem, and still to-day in use poetically and symbolically. (Cited on a former page.) Still Menelaus is not the universal Returner, at least not practically, though he hears theoretically from Egyptian Proteus "the Truth as it is in itself". So there is needed another greater, more all-inclusive Returner than Menelaus.

(3) This is our third Returner, the heroic truly universal one, Ulysses son of Laertes, the most comprehensive soul of the whole Greek world. For he is not only the doer but the recorder or the

singer of his own Greatest Deed; he has not only Will the actor, but Mind the seer, yea the self-seer, and also the self-revealer. Hence in Ulysses we can trace the poet looking at and telling about himself and his art more fully than in any other character. In fact the *Odyssey* has a special personage whose vocation is that of the poet, and whose function may be said to represent Homer in Homer—the poet's self in the poet's work. A very suggestive life-line of the supreme singer will appear accordingly, when we listen to him as he poetizes his own guild of fellow-craftsmen chanting their lays before the hearkening folk.

II.

HOMER'S THREE POETS.

A significant phase of Homer's own biography is to be traced in what he says of the three poets whom he introduces by name singing their strains in the *Odyssey*—Phemius, Demodocus, Ulysses. This Ulyssean song (*Odyssey* Books IX-XII) he adopts and interweaves as an integral part of his own poem, while in the other two cases he gives hardly more than their themes. Thus the lay of Ulysses he incorporates into his complete epos, of which it is but one large and very unique constituent or member, he being the fourth poet including all the rest and much else. Thus he brings to the fore in the *Odyssey* his own fellow-singers, of whom he seems so forgetful in the *Iliad*.

The twin sovereign poems of Homer differ from each other at certain cardinal points, which differences, however, will be found to spring from one and the same personality in its two most distinctive periods of development. At present it is to be emphasized that the poet in his second poem, the *Odyssey*, sketches the outlines of his own spiritual portrait as the singing creator of his song. Hence we are led to construe some leading lineaments of Homer's own poetic biography from what he assigns to the bards, his fellow guildsmen, in the *Odyssey*.

Now this his later work brings repeatedly into prominent notice the public singer, minstrel, bard (*aoidos*). Thus we catch Homer glorifying his own office by introducing and celebrating with honor his special vocation and professional place in the community. The *Iliad* has very small mention of such a character or calling; from this fact we are brought to infer that the poet has become more self-regarding or introverted of mind in his last poem—more subjective it may be designated after a somewhat modern wording. In this example as in numerous others, we may well feel that the *Odyssey* touches a much deeper, more internal strain of self-experience than the *Iliad*.

Such a new psychical trait of the poet we are to see flowing out of the Return, and attuned in harmony with the same at its source. For this Return of Ulysses is not merely outward but inward, not merely geographic but mental, not in space so

much as in spirit. Indeed Homer's geography gets confused and quite untraceable, while his mind runs clear and free of all limited place and duration. He now must be observed turning back upon himself and portraying his inner evolution; such is in truth the larger, profounder, more universal side of this Return (*Nostos*) of Ulysses to his former Ithacan world—to his home and country, from which he once had to separate and to march forth to the Trojan War. But now there has risen upon his life's path a new foe: he, having battled with and put down the external Troy, finds himself involved in a second Trojan War, quite opposite to that first one, for he has to battle with and put down his own internal Troy, whose citadel or line of citadels stand in the way of his restoration and recovery, and so of his complete Return. Whereof the new, more devious and labyrinthine complex of his life-lines is ordered and attuned to a song.

Hence in this fresh field of his self-experience and self revelation we shall follow the poet giving his record of the *Odyssey's* poets, that is, of himself in his various poetic stages. Of these stages we shall here set down in order the three main ones, which are fortunately represented in the *Odyssey* by three different singers or bards, who are in each case creations and indeed utterances and personal projections of the one superlative, all-including genius of Homer.

The three singing characters to whom the poet imparts his own gift of song in the course of his

poem are the bards Phemius, Demodocus, and Ulysses. Of course the latter is also the hero of the whole action, still to him in person is significantly assigned the most original bardic strain in the work.

I. *Phemius*. Such is the name of the Ithacan balladist or bard, who is mentioned early in the poem (I, 152) as having to "sing for the suitors of Penelope by compulsion". Somewhat further on in the same Book (I. 315) Phemius with his song becomes the center of a spirited scene like a little drama. The bard was singing "the sad return of the Achaeans from Troy", while the Suitors sat around and listened with silent pleasure, for the subject hinted to them the probable fate of the Returner Ulysses in which they had their chief interest.

But such a strain was anything but agreeable to the long-waiting anxious wife Penelope who descended from her chamber in tears and reproved the singer: "O Phemius, cease this painful strain which rends the heart in my breast; thou knowest many other delightful songs praising the deeds of Heroes and Gods which minstrels are wont to sing." Thus Penelope remanded the singer to his old accustomed lays, evidently like those of the *Iliad*.

But who should come to the bard's defence but her son Telemachus in keen reply: "O mother, stop not the inspired minstrel from singing as the spirit urges him; and men applaud more the song

which is newest," which now is that of the Return from Troy not yet wholly ended. Very suggestive is this distinction between the older strains of the *Iliad* and the latest ones of the *Odyssey* just here in the heat of the making. Thus we may catch a glimpse of Homer himself speaking his view of his art in the person of his representative.

Still more impressive is the last scene in which Phemius appears, being present at the tragic time of reckoning when Ulysses, who has now reached home, is serving up to the guilty the consequences of their evil deeds. (Book XXII, 330.) The bard who had so long entertained with his strains the iniquitous suitors, springs to the knees of the madened avenger and supplicates: "O Ulysses, have mercy: it will be a grief to thee hereafter if thou slayest me who am a minstrel and sing the lays of Gods and Men. I am the self-taught poet, and the God has inspired me with many kinds of songs. Now I am singing to thee as a God: be merciful." Whereupon Telemachus intercedes for him "the blameless man", since he was compelled "by superior strength" to give of his art to the wicked.

In the foregoing extract we again catch the poet giving glimpses of himself and of his vocation. Phemius claims a kind of sacred right for his person as the singer before Gods and Men. Then he must be both Self-moved and God-moved, inspired within and also from above. Finally Phemius seems to promise to sing the divine lay of Ulysses, or this *Odyssey*, if such be the meaning of his

rather uncertain phrase. At any rate we here observe the bard taking a look at himself, and telling somewhat of his poetic prerogative. Tuneful Phe-mius, however, sang of the present, of the Return now taking place, though he knew the old lays too. But another poet of a diverse character is brought in to celebrate the past.

II. *Demodocus*. Homer employs a new bard to sing for the new folk the Pheacians (VI) who are very different from the foregoing Ithacans (Books I-IV), indeed quite a distinct people with its own life and consciousness. Still these idealized Pheacians were Greeks, spoke the Greek tongue, worshiped the Greek Gods, and participated especially in the Greek Mythus of Troy with its grand national conflict, which filled their poetic horizon. They know as yet nothing of the Return, of which they are soon to hear in its deepest phase through the great Returner himself.

In the meantime the local Pheacian bard, Demodocus, is to be brought forward and shown in the full range of his song, which he chants in three separate cantos, constituting the main thread of an entire Book of the poem (VIII). Hence this may well be called the Book of the Bard, since he is now the central character of those Pheacian scenes. Particularly noticeable is the fact that all three songs of the minstrel take their themes from the Trojan War now past and far-away. Moreover they hover about the Iliad, though no special event or deed of that older poem is here repeated by the

singer. But its heroes and Gods appear again, though the circumstances are new. Demodocus is, therefore, the traditional poet of the ancient God-world and of its heroic shapes, though he clothes it in fresh garments. Not a great original poet or singing world-maker, he really is repeating the *Iliad*'s old environment, giving to its antique forms some new turns and incidents.

Thus we catch Homer outlining a former stage of himself and of his poetry here repeated in the bard Demodocus, who is an echo in all his three cantos, of the transmitted *Iliad*, to be sure with an order and presentation of his own. Still he gives no scene directly out of the *Iliad*, but he takes one of the Pre-*Iliad* and one of the Post-*Iliad*, between which he inserts a wild burlesque of the two anti-Hellenic Gods, Mars and Venus, both of whom are conquered in combat by Diomed in the same Book of the *Iliad* (V). He evidently avoids any treatment of well known Homeric scenes, for that would be mere imitation; still his background is Troy, wherein he reflects the Greek poetic consciousness as first expressed and indeed fully created in the *Iliad*.

Thus Homer as Ulysses is made to listen to his former self's poetry, and very naturally rewards the singer with a stupendous compliment: "Demodocus, I praise thee above all mortals; either the Muse or Apollo has taught thee, so well dost thou sing the fate of the Greeks." Doubtless all poets love to hear their own former songs in new guise,

or listen to themselves eternally reproducing and reproduced, which songs at least manifest fresh forms of their art. Accordingly Homer through Ulysses begs the loftily lauded Pheacian minstrel to sing the culminating lay of the Wooden Horse with the final capture of Troy, which was the grand triumph of Mind in the Trojan War. Ulysses, hitherto disguising himself in that unsophisticated Pheacian world, has now to reveal himself as the real hero of the Fall of Troy, and therefore greater than Achilles or Agamemnon. Hence the Odyssey acclaims him (in its first sentence) as "the man who sacked the sacred burg of Troy."

III. *Ulysses*. Not now the active Greek hero in war, or the wandering much-enduring Returner over the sea, but the original singer, the poet: wherein Homer, serving up a mighty surprise, endows his chief character with his own vocation, as if that was the apex of human heroic attainment. First may be noticed that Ulysses as the new bard is not localized in song, is not an Ithacan minstrel like Phemius or a Pheacian singer like Demodocus; he goes from land to land, winning all sorts of experience, the daringly unconfined, the universal poet. Moreover he cuts loose from the Trojan background, which was common to both the foregoing bards, though they employed it in different ways. But now Homer makes his oncoming poet Ulysses drop the Mythos of Troy, hitherto his one supreme prolific theme of song, and to create another wholly different mythical setting for his lay. That is, Ho-

mer as the singing Ulysses makes a new Mythology quite diverse from, if not opposite to that of the Olympian world, which dominates his Iliad and its Trojan conflict.

This cardinal change of the poet and of his poetry is set forth in a lengthy episode of the Odyssey embracing four entire Books. (IX, X, XI, XII.) The singer now announces himself by name (IX, 19) as the subject of his own song: "I am Ulysses, son of Laertes." Thus the Homeric Ego leaps out and starts to heroize itself in a new strain which chants its own adventures inwardly though projected outwardly into strange and for the most part dehumanized shapes. (This wonderland of fabulous forms is the most suggestive and prophetic, hence the most difficult part of the Odyssey, requiring for its right comprehension a peculiar sort of study and mental outfit not much in vogue hitherto among Homer's philological and literary expounders. Those who wish to see the present author's view, can find these four Books specially organized, interpreted, and integrated with the entire poem in his *Commentary on the Odyssey*. pp 231-395.)

Thus Homer the poet takes his many-minded hero Ulysses of the Trojan Mythos, and sublimates him into the poet of a new mythological order of beings who dwell in their own distinctive world. It is evident that these three bards, Phemius, Demodocus, and Ulysses—the Ithacan, the Pheacian, and the Wanderer—follow one another in ascending

stages, which represent Homer's own poetic evolution, as he looks back at it from the height of life's long discipline. Polyphemus, the Lestrygonians, the Sirens, Scylla and Charybdis are no longer sunny Olympians of the Overworld, but dark demonic, yea monstrous shapes of the Underworld which the poet has now to meet and to master, finally building his grand fresh experience into his poem. Undoubtedly the crude materials of this new poetic structure he found floating in scattered tales which bubble up everywhere from the folk-soul, and which are found among all peoples around the globe. But Homer has collected, ordered, and transfigured these early materials, more primitive indeed than the Trojan Mythos, into the eternal temple of song indwelt of his creative genius.

Worthy of notice in this connection is what the swineherd Eumaeus says concerning the charm of the words of Ulysses, when the latter recounts the tale of his adventures: "He is like unto a singer whom the Gods have taught to sing strains of weal and woe to listening mortals, who have a never-failing desire to hear his song." (*Odyssey* XVII, 518.) Thus his trials and sufferings have made Ulysses a poet, for no such faculty does he show in the *Iliad*, but rather the reverse, being there the man of solid understanding more than of far-flying imagination. But now Homer seems to have transformed his previous rather prosaic sober-thoughted hero into his uniquely fantasy-gifted minstrel, assigning to the same on the whole

the most original and imaginative portion of all his poetry. Thus the poet unfolds and evolves his many-minded Ulysses into a poet, that is, into himself as the culmination of his heroic career. After performing many famous deeds, and passing through many wonderful experiences, he turns back upon himself and builds his long discipline into a poem which is as much transformed from the old Trojan Mythos, as he is from his old Trojan Self. Far longer drawn-out but far less significant is the external contest of Ulysses with the Suitors in his Ithacan home, so that the last half of the *Odyssey* seems in form, style and expansion a foreshow of the discursive modern novel.

The voyage to wonderland is, however, but one stage of the total biography of the Homeric Ulysses, who has had already a memorable career in the Trojan War, and who is still to perform fresh marvelous feats of mind and of valor in winning back for himself "sunny Ithaca and prudent Penelope". Then we are not to forget that besides these three poets so prominently named and signalized in the *Odyssey*, there is the fourth poet, their maker, Homer himself, of whose grand totality of poetic creation they are but passing musical fragments.

III.

THE HOMERIC FATE-COMPELLER.

Already a number of significant differences between the *Odyssey* and its forerunner the *Iliad*

have been pointed out, which, taken in succession, show a pronounced psychological deepening of their author. The very fact that the Achillean Homer confines himself to one locality, to one city, to one set of circumstances, indicates a certain fixity like fate both in his spirit and in his poem. On the other hand the very fact that the Ulyssean Homer breaks away from the one locality, from the one city with its set traditional environment, and begins to wander over the border beyond and beyond to many cities and peoples, suggests an act of fresh independence and liberation from the past—an assertion of freedom, at least in its first outward thrust. Thus the wont-transcending poet untethers himself from his local ties, and makes a lurch for a greater liberty.

Now this release is not only spatial but also spiritual. Far-sighted Homer must have foreseen, or at least forefelt that Oriental menace which overhung the Greek world in Asia. We may well think that he, the seer, had the prevision to behold his adopted city of Smyrna couched in the very jaws of the ever-returning conflict between Hellas and the Orient, so that she might at any time be crunched to death in their clash. Homer's foresight thousands of years ago is strangely suggested, and fearfully confirmed, yea flaringly illumined by today's burning Smyrna which the Turks have just captured (September 1922), and seemingly handed over to final conflagration. Through these flames we may read another new, indeed the

very latest commentary on the ancient poet, who fled from that fated world back to his Western European Greece, as thousands are seeking to flee this minute by every steamer across the Egean.

But the supreme result of Homer's flight from Smyrna, which became also the Return of his Ulysses homeward, was the enduring poetic record of his wanderings, or of his spirit's new strides of emancipation. Thus Homer unfated himself, as already said, and the process thereof is sung in the *Odyssey*. On the other hand through the *Iliad* runs a strain of fatedness, which we hear from both the Trojan and the Greek heroes, especially from Hector and Achilles, each of whom foreknows and foretells his own tragic destiny. Herein we note a marked evolution in the man and in his works. For Homer shows himself more or less of a fatalist in his *Iliad*, which so often forecasts the coming doom of the individual and of the city. But the *Odyssey* takes its chief delight and wins its deepest worth in portraying how its hero counter-vails the insidious toils which the cunning Fates spin to catch the much-enduring, many-minded Ulysses, who shows himself still more cunning than they are. For he thwarts all the lures and snares, outer and inner, which are laid to catch him, and successfully reaches wife and country, becoming veritably the grand Homeric Fate-compeller, who is in fact none other than the poet himself.

Thus the reader is to find and to treasure up the basic life-thought that Homer celebrates his hero's

realisation of freedom as the ultimate triumph and conclusion of his song. The end of the *Odyssey*, accordingly, brings the peace which is to be lasting, though won after many severe conflicts, some of which have been bloody. Herein also lies a contrast with the *Iliad*, which winds up fitfully in a truce soon to be broken. And from that olden time till to-day, no permanent peace but only a temporary cessation of warfare has existed between Troy and Hellas, or between the Orient and Europe. The two sides at this moment are trying to patch up a sort of armistice, as did ancient Achilles with Priam when he ransoms the latter's dead son Hector. Thus the *Iliad* concludes with the peace and reconciliation of the two supreme world-foes, Europe and Asia; and so the earliest poet, our Homer, sings at the close of his poem an ideal of national pacification which has remained unrealized to this day, and seems at present farther off than ever.

But coming back to that strain in the *Odyssey* which we have called Fate-compelling, let us cite some leading indications. First we begin with the highest, namely the supreme God, Zeus himself, who in his opening speech strikes the difference between what he is now in the *Odyssey* and what he was once in the *Iliad*.

I. It would seem to the Ulyssean Homer that mortals in the present reaction have taken to criticising the Gods, being dissatisfied with the way in which divinity has conducted itself, evidently

as such conduct is presented in the *Iliad*. For even supreme Zeus has felt the sting of reproach, since he cries out: "O the audacity! what blame mortals are now heaping upon us Gods, for they say that we are the source of their ills, whereas by their own follies they have sufferings beyond what is ordained." (*Odyssey* I, 32.) Zeus cites as the most recent instance of such wrongful censure of the Gods the post-Trojan case of Aegisthus who received due warning from above against his wicked deed. But the statement of Zeus is far more general than that, and must include the Trojan War, the cause of which is being ascribed by men to the Olympians. The same question has come up to-day in this form: Is not God to blame for the recent World-War? Has not Christianity with its doctrine of universal love signally failed? Providence has turned out a delusive dream, more fatal than Agamemnon's.

Thus we find, in this later and somewhat reactionary *Odyssey*, that the first World-War has called up a mighty challenge of the existent religion quite similar to that which the last World-War is evoking over all the earth just now. So Zeus deems it necessary to answer from his lofty Olympian throne down to his reproachful mankind: "Through your own deeds ye suffer, through your own freedom—I am not responsible. So take the consequences of your beloved liberty."

Such is at present the decree of the Highest Greek God, quite different from any we ever heard

from him in the Iliad. It indicates a decidedly new evolution of Homeric theology, whose divine mouthpiece now so threateningly asserts man's accountability and freedom. Still Olympus is present and even at work, though distant in the background of the Odyssey, showing far less interference with human affairs than was its wont at Troy. Man in the new poem has become more self-determined and less God-determined and less Fate-determined, and so has his poet. In fact a new set of supernatural Powers has to a degree taken the place of the Iliad's Olympians, though still within the Olympian order. Ulysses will have to meet them face to face, and overcome them in his wonderland of adventures. (Odyssey, Books IX-XII.)

II. This new turn from above down toward the man individual, toward the *me* or Ego, is indicated in the beginning line of the Odyssey, whose second word is the heretofore unheard first personal pronoun (*moi*). Thus the poet now insists that the inspiration of the Muse is to pass to and through him in order that he sing worthily the hero. Moreover the verb here (*ennepe*) has a touch which should always be felt by the penetrating reader, for it commands: "Tell to me within (*en*), O Muse, the man." That is, the internality of the poetic process in the poet himself is here stressed by that little preposition (*en*) as never before. Contrast with this the first line of the Iliad which invokes: "Sing O Goddess the wrath"

of the hero, as if the song fell direct from the Muse, the poet's part in his own poem being left out. This difference accords with what has been already noticed in the *Odyssey*: the new prominence given to the high vocation of its singers, as well as the special self-assertion of our singing Homer's own personality.

Thus more introspective, subjective, psychological the *Odyssey* shows itself at the first push into being than the *Iliad*, and therein signifies a deepening of the poet's self-consciousness which has come with the advance of his years. In this connection we may cite the situation at the Phaeacian court when the Homeric Ulysses (or the Ulyssean Homer) tells who he is, giving his own name, character and origin. Moreover he begins to sing of himself and of his adventures, thus becoming the poet of his own biography even if mythically disguised. His internal heroic life is now unfolded before us, not that external heroic deed at Troy, which is a right theme for his former self, and for a Demodocus. A self-conscious art is here evolving in the poet who expresses the manifold trials of his spirit on returning home, whereby he is getting restored from that long fluctuating Trojan World-War.

In like manner there is a gleam of his present tendency to self-revelation when he announces his name and his fame to the giant Polyphemus who at once recognizes his foretold conqueror. And the derivation of his name from an inner personal

quality (XIX, 407), even if fanciful, shows him at least looking inward and describing himself.

III. Another marked difference between the Ulysses of the *Iliad* and of the *Odyssey* springs from his new attitude toward women. In the doings at Troy, he manifests none of that sexually passionate nature which there breaks out into the fierce quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon. The modern reader never forgets, for usually it gives him somewhat of a shock that in the very first scene of the *Iliad* he is whelmed into a furious altercation between the Hero and the Leader over the possession of two female captives. The effects of that strife run through the entire poem to its close. In fact the whole Trojan War was about a stolen wife. Now Ulysses takes no part in these troubles over the women of the Grecian camp, in which there must have been not a few enslaved from the neighboring pillaged towns; he has no female captive in his tent, whereof any record tells, as have both Achilles and Agamemnon. He seems still the family man; more than once in the *Iliad* he recalls his infant boy Telemachus, and the memory of his wonderful young wife Penelope at home must have remained fresh and active.

Rather is he the cold intellectual unemotional man of that Greek host, more addicted even to forbidden delights of the mind than those of the senses. Indeed he is contrasted with Achilles as the hero of brain more than of brawn, of inner self-possession and not of volcanic wrath. So it

comes that finally Troy is to fall not through the fighter but through the thinker, who is Ulysses.

Thus far for the Iliad. Now the Odyssey marks a most surprising change in this respect, for the dry middle-aged man, the sage cool-headed Ulysses therein shows himself quite susceptible, yea submissible to female charm, and strangely seems to pass through an intense passional spell in his career.

IV. The fact must be acknowledged that the many-minded, intellectual self-contained Ulysses is portrayed by his poet as taking a dip, yea two deep dips into prolonged amatory experiences during his Return to settled institutional life. Two shapes of beautiful, enticing women, temptresses we may call them, cross his path of return and restoration, and detain him in their toils for years. That wonderful intellect of the thinker, by which he brought about the fall of Troy, becomes spell-bound to a new fate, being enthralled to the sensuous fascination of sex. These ideal seductive beings who so bedazzle the mature sage's wisdom, belong to the poet's wonderland, and their power over such a mind appears to have a strain of that marvelous seething underworld of soul which breaks up at times from its long repression through the very ice of human reason.

The first of the twain is the all-famous Circe, whose draught turns the companions of Ulysses into swine, though he by his craft now enjoys and escapes, but he will not the next time. Thus she

has become for all future ages a symbol of that indulgence which makes man an animal. The many-minded, versatile Ulysses, however, rescues not only himself but also his companions, whereupon the whole company remains in Circe's sweet bower a full year, experiencing all the pleasures of her world of the senses. But though sunk in such a protracted orgy of enjoyment, Ulysses does not wholly lose his aspiration for his true home; so at last he breaks his fetters after a long spell of incontinence, and starts again on his Return. An heroic inner victory the poet seems to stress it, greater than any outer triumph in battle on the plains of Troy.

But in his wider wanderings again he falls a victim to a more elemental, subtle temptress, Calypso, the female Concealer in her Dark Island of Ogygia, where she hid him or his soul eight years in caressing bondage to her sex's magical fascination. Why such a long discipline of the many-minded, ageing, wisdom-illuminated Ulysses under the spell of the Dark Lady's co-ercive love, who "wishes to keep him forever as her spouse!" We have to think it to be a necessary stage of his complete Return and Restoration, as the poet construes his career, peering out from under its mythical guise.

But again all the stronger wells up with the years that eternal aspiration of Ulysses, which has made him discontented with all the delights and splendors of those two enchanting goddesses,

who, he affirms, "never did persuade the heart within my breast." So he, the ever-experiencing hero, keeps recovering himself within and without in his long devious Return. Thus the poet portrays him as specially passion's final complete master after the hardest, most searching trials. The Fate-compeller over nature's primordial dualism of sex is thus heroized by Time's earliest poet, after blackest sunken spells of despair.

Accordingly it will be noted that old Homer also records his desperate trial with the elemental might of love. Something of the kind is known to be true of his three supreme poetic world-brothers by their own self-disclosures. Shakespeare likewise has celebrated his so-called Dark Lady, to whom he seems to have been thrall'd longer than Ulysses was to Calypso. And Dante too had his life-spell of incontinence through which fleet the shadowy forms of the Pargoletta and other sinful allurements, whereof he makes ample confession to all time in his poem. And the readers of Goethe cannot help recalling similar instances in the German poet's career, inasmuch as he himself declares that his songful Muse, both in verse and prose, was his heart's dearest confessor.

In such fashion the poet mythologizes the many-minded Ulysses in his intense and protracted struggle with the various hostile agencies seeking to enthrall his soul, and thus to enslave his free personality. From the outer doom of Smyrna in the East to his inner bondage of passion in the West

he has kept up one continued fight with his ever-menacing Fate. But he surmounts all his barriers within and without, so that he may well be hailed the Homeric Fate-compeller.

But this is only one of the life-lines of the grand Ulyssean experience. There are other important ones, which must be recounted if we would conceive and make our own the whole man either as hero or as poet.

IV.

HOMER'S LIFE OF ULYSSES.

Evidently in order to win the full bearing and significance of the Ulyssean Homer, which is our theme, we should take an all-rounded survey of the Homeric Ulysses. For into the personal evolution of this hero of his mind, the poet without doubt pours more of his own psychical self than into any other outstanding figure of his two books. Indeed it may be said that Homer's Ulysses is laid out and built up on larger lines, with a more comprehensive psychology, than can be found elsewhere in any single character of Literature. That is, he embraces and manifests an approachingly complete inventory of humanity's distinctive attributes.

Here again the poet, if the student's mind be duly focused, can be heard declaring some such superlative intention. His most distinctive and all-inclusive epithet for Ulysses, among many more special ones, is *many-minded*, for thus the Greek

polumetis is to be fittingly translated, signifying the man of many kinds of human mentality. *Minerva*, the hero's Goddess, the Latin *Mens*, and our English *Mind*, are each allied to that basic Homeric vocable *Metis* (even a Goddess so named is in Hesiod as first wife of Zeus), all of these European words being derived from one old Aryan root (Curtius, *Grundzüge, Gr. Etym.* p. 279—Second Edition). The poet, accordingly, will embody in his Ulysses, Mind itself epitomized with all its faculties in the individual man, who is now the Homeric hero endowed with a sort of All-Mind or Universal Intelligence.

Has the poet succeeded in realizing his stupendous conception? Perhaps not entirely on all sides; he has wrought out and exemplified some salient characteristics of his hero more completely and strikingly than others, so that a full-rounded impression is only obtained by a synthesis of the whole career of the man. The result is that the character of the total Ulysses in its entire sweep and meaning is quite as generally misquoted and misunderstood as is the total Achilles—which latter fact we have emphasized on a previous page. For merely the cunning shifty deceptive Ulysses is the commonly accepted, even literary notion of this Homeric hero. But as Achilles is far more than his wrath, so Ulysses is far more than his craft, though this he has and uses. It is, however, but one manifestation or phasis of the universal mind of the poet's whole hero.

Hence we should seek as our final object to round out the whole Ulysses in his wholeness. To this end we must watch his complete evolution from start to finish, as set forth by the poet. For Ulysses moves through and winds up the entire Mythus of Troy with his mind and deeds. More than any other Homeric character is he present throughout the Trojan theme from overture to finale. He lasts as long as the poet sings—is the poet and sings in the poet's place, as already noted.

Accordingly we must first grasp that the spiritual outline of Ulysses is larger, more varied, including more than any other character in Homer or perhaps in Literature. Point to another so complex and so comprehensive; so subtle and so profound—does he exist in any other of the world's Literary Bibles? Hence our first duty is to take a glance over the entire field of action which Ulysses covers in his whole career. There is a distinctly complete life of this hero indicated by Homer—a fuller biography of him we can make out than of any other Homeric personage.

Three well-marked stages or periods can be traced, through which Ulysses passes in the works of the poet: the time before the expedition to Troy (the Pre-Trojan Ulysses); the time of the Ten Years' War, which gives his career till Troy is taken (the Trojan Ulysses); finally the time after the Fall of Troy, recounted in the Odyssey (the Post-Trojan Ulysses). Yet each of these periods embraces a considerable number of events

and changes, which make up his complete biography. That is, Ulysses took part in the Preparation, in the Expedition, and in the Return, each of which was sharply periodized as lasting ten years already in antiquity. All of them together form the three decades of the grand Trojan enterprise.

In these three stages we shall find him growing in personal importance from youth to the close. The junior Ulysses is recognized as the man of promise and is employed in matters especially diplomatic, those which require mind, as the embassies. The middle-aged Ulysses, is the one we see in the *Iliad*—verging toward forty he must have been if he spent ten years in the preparation and quite as many more years in the actual war before Troy. Then the senior Ulysses is the supreme hero of the *Odyssey's* Return. The parallel with Homer's periods is suggestive—the poet must have set out from Smyrna at about forty as we construe his life.

I. *The Pre-Trojan Time of Ulysses.* As already indicated, there is a preparatory decade of the Trojan War, for which Greece is shown getting ready. Troy also must have been informed concerning what was meditated against her, for when the Greek expedition appears before her gates, she is not caught by surprise. But as to the Greeks, Homer gives many scattered hints of the deliberation of the leaders until the expedition, which was a mighty combined effort of all Hellas, had sailed from Aulis. Later legend adds much that is irrelevant to this early account, and is on the whole omissible.

The Pre-Trojan Ulysses, we may call him Ulysses junior, is portrayed as very active for the war and for the restoration of Helen. There is a later story which names him as one of the suitors of Helen and also a feigner of insanity in order to shirk the Trojan War, in which ruse he is detected by Palamedes. But Homer knows nothing of such desultory statements; on the contrary he makes the young Ulysses from the start one of the prime movers in favor of the war against Troy. We may suppose that he, the man of foresight, already saw the impending unavoidable struggle between Hellas and the Orient. He did not need to simulate madness, or to take an oath to restore Helen. He belonged to the Southern, that is, the more civilized Greece, and was well aware of its problems. So he was the chosen man, though so young, to do the works of mind in the embassies.

Hence we seek to bring together in some kind of ordered sequence the early work and character of this junior Pre-Trojan Ulysses. Does he at such a juvenile stage foreshow what he is to attain hereafter? One thing is certain: when we come to collect all the scattered notices in Homer's two poems about this young man, we are surprised at their number and significant interconnection. Even about his name and origin some fanciful items are given (*Odyssey* XIX, 319) which have been already alluded to.

The first cardinal fact of his biography is that he has won a young wife, who in her domain shows

herself as heroic as he is in his. Penelope still remains the exemplary Greek woman, and has a career quite as famous as that of her husband, with which it is intimately connected. Such we may deem (with the poet) the first grand exploit of Ulysses, the prelude of his whole life's adventure, and likewise the final goal of his return. Most monogamous of celebrated women, which trait makes her the ideal of the Trojan War and of all futurity, in contrast with the two other Greek wives of that age, the erring but restored Helen, and the faithless fated Clytemnestra. No wonder that still to-day girl babes are named after Penelope, who seems to stand next in female fame to Mother Eve, and is a better woman. Which of the two would you take if you had the pick? Such then, is the first heroic achievement of young Ulysses, his getting this unique helpmeet, for she rises up his saving ideal throughout all the furious catastrophes, physical and spiritual, of his long adventurous life. With Penelope the career of Ulysses starts and closes—she is its Alpha and Omega. So the first World-Poet, like the last, portrays the eternal Woman-Soul (*Das Ewig-Weiliche*).

The second epochal deed of the young Pre-Trojan Ulysses is his embassy to Troy with the husband Menelaus in order to demand the restoration of the abducted wife Helen. Such an office implies a recognition of him as the ablest mind of the Greek princes of Southern Hellas, who selected

and sent him on such a responsible mission. Quite a full account we have of the appearance of the two at Troy in the *Iliad* (Book III), in which the imposing external appearance of Menelaus is stressed, while Ulysses is praised for his eloquence, "in which no mortal might compete with him".

The embassy, however, does not succeed; Troy prefers to keep Helen, though it means war. In the Trojan assembly Paris was too strong, and it is intimated that he used money to help his cause (*Iliad* XI, 125), though Hector and Antenor, the best Trojans favored the restoration of Helen. But the fight had to come, embassies could not stop it, as little as they could the recent World-War or the American Civil War. We are not told what Ulysses said to that Trojan assembly, but we may imagine his speech, tactfully yet firmly announcing the ultimatum and witnessing its rejection.

What did the many-minded young diplomat see at Troy, and carry back to Hellas in his report? For we may be sure he was sent to spy out the city and its resources, as well as to feel and to record its real spirit. There can be no doubt that Ulysses, surveying the whole situation on both sides, was led to the unalterable belief that the conflict could not be avoided. That Trojan World-War must take place: such became his intensest conviction, in which we have already seen him surpassing both the Leader Agamemnon and the Hero Achilles, and all the Greek army before Troy. (See *Iliad*; Book II, for a most vivid illustration.) Thus the poet

portrays Ulysses as the man having the deepest and firmest conviction of the whole Hellenic world, as regards its task in the forthcoming struggle between Orient and Occident. Such ultimate truth of the situation the man of supreme intelligence among the Greeks has derived from his immediate personal experience at Troy during his embassy. Thus he comes to represent the intellect of the Greek cause armed with its unswerving purpose.

Of course he took note of numerous other important matters while in the Trojan city. He saw polygamy in Priam's life if not in his palace, heard the repentant soul of captive Helen, learned about Troy's Asiatic auxiliaries, marked the two parties in the city, the Hellenizing and the Orientalizing. But his fixed conclusion could not help urging him that Troy was not only headed for the Orient, but was organizing all her resources and allies for her Oriental design, and that her ultimate scheme was to seize and to overwhelm even European Hellas in the same direction, which meant of course the undoing of Greek civilisation.

Such are some of the chief results of this Embassy of Ulysses, for they show themselves afterwards in his life and indeed all through the Trojan crisis. The young ambassador now goes home, and with a deepened earnestness proclaims his new-won knowledge with all the gifts of his oratory. Evidently he has become the intellectual spokesman and promulgator of the War, and his cry throughout Southern Hellas must have been like

that of old Roman Cato: Troy is to be destroyed (*delenda est*).

Now comes the second important embassy of the ardent Pre-Trojan Ulysses. He is sent with Nestor to Northern Greece, to the more remote backward Thessalian part of Hellas, which could not be so enthusiastic over that dubiously stolen woman of the South. Probably those distant rustics had not heard much about the case. So the well-informed persuasive Ulysses is sent from the more advanced and more deeply concerned Southern Greeks, to tell the real cause of the great expedition. For he had seen Troy inside, had heard its tendency stated by its own speakers, and thus had experienced its anti-Hellenic spirit and purpose. The young orator might be deemed too verdant and extravagant hence there was sent with him the aged wise man Nestor, to back up with calm wisdom the youth's more impassioned eloquence. At any rate the embassy was a complete success; the ruder but more virile North was roused to take part in the grand Hellenic enterprise. Thus the two separated and mutually repugnant sections of Hellas became united in their common cause, and were ready to march to Aulis for embarkation.

But the chief acquisition of this embassy was that it enlisted the best fighter of the whole army, indeed its hero on the side of physical excellence—young Achilles. With him went along two other very notable characters—his friend Patroclus, upon whose death so much of the Iliad pivots, and his

teacher Phoenix, noblest of souls, with his one great speech of reconciliation.

Such is, in general, the Pre-Hellenic epoch of the junior Ulysses, foreshowing the main lines of his character as it will hereafter unfold. He is the brain of the whole business, the man of best mind and of strongest conviction. Did his wife Penelope bid him go to the war? Probably she did not think much of Helen, still she could not help knowing that her own deepest principle of monogamy was at stake in the conflict. Probably she thought that the fight would not last very long, and her husband would soon be with her again in his home. But his absence continued twenty years—a fearful discipline, but it makes her the most womanized woman that was ever portrayed.

It is due, however, to pass to the next grand stage in the life of Ulysses, as set forth by Homer—the second decade of the hero, as the legend dates it—the mature man being now tried by the emergencies of war.

II. *The Trojan Time of Ulysses.* It is evident that the human discipline of personal conflict in battle with the foe will be very different from that of the epoch which has just preceded. Moreover we fortunately have now a direct record of the hero's deeds in the *Iliad*, which tell of him along with the rest of its foremost characters.

In the First Book of the poem (I, 311, 440) Ulysses is chosen to take Chryseis, the captive woman of Agamemnon, back to her father, and to mitigate

the plague in the Greek camp by the sacrifice of a hecatomb to the offended God Apollo. A delicate business requiring both knowledge of mind and skillful handling: hence he is here at the start labeled twice the many-minded (*polumetis*). He succeeds in conciliating the God and his priest, but the other deeper plague, both spiritual and physical, the quarrel between the Hero (Achilles) and the Leader (Agamemnon) still remains in its full intensity. Ulysses has no power to heal that deepest dualism of the Greek consciousness, which must now work itself out through the terrible throes of experience on both sides.

But it is the Second Book of the Iliad which enthrones Ulysses in his intellectual supremacy, a fact which seems indicated by the personal presence of Athena, Goddess of Wisdom, at his side, as his divine inspirer, and his deed also acclaims him the master-mind of all that Greek host before Troy. Likewise it shows him endowed with a more adamant conviction than any other man in the army, prince or plebeian. This conviction tells him that there is no running away from the great conflict of the time and of his Hellenic folk; the war must be fought to a finish in Troy's fall. But enough of the present crisis has been stated already.

Skipping some lesser actions we come to his new embassy (Book IX) to Achilles, now the wrathful hero, not the capricious school-boy of Phthia, who gave so much trouble to his teacher Phoenix. Again Ulysses and Nestor (with some inferior as-

sistants) are chosen chief ambassadors, as they had been quite ten years, according to the story's tally, before the present time, to win the hero anew for the great cause. But they fail completely in this second effort, he rejects with scorn the offer of placation. Indeed he seems to twit Ulysses as double souled: "Hateful to me as the gates of Hell is the man who hides one thing in his heart and says another; but I shall speak outright my own mind." Thus we catch a decided undertone of rivalry, if not of jealousy, between the hero of brawn and the hero of brain, the physical and the mental athletes. And Achilles gives a perceptible slur to Ulysses in the title many-devised (*polumechanos*) which is different in meaning and temper from his usual epithet many-minded (*polumetis*).

Still Ulysses appears at the final reconciliation between the Greek Hero and the Greek Leader, which, however, he has had no hand in bringing about. But he seizes the opportunity, with no little energy to assert his sphere of pre-eminence to Achilles in person: "Mightiest of the Achaeans art thou, and far mightier than I am with the spear; but in council I surpass thee greatly, for I am older and know much more." A flash of resentment we may well feel dictating this proud declaration of his own mental superiority, in answer to the contempt of Achilles for the works of mind in the conduct of the war.

Here we conclude the career of Ulysses as given in the Iliad, for henceforth he drops into the back-

ground, unimportant during the rest of the poem, though not wholly unmentioned. But the secret rivalry and indeed antagonism between the hero of mind and the hero of body can be felt all through the *Iliad*, though overtopped by the fateful wrath with its strife. Still after the close of the poem with its double reconciliation of the Hero, the war is by no means ended. Nor is its principle won, which is the triumph of the Hellenic world over the Orient.

At this point then starts a new phase of the career of Ulysses, especially in his relation to the hero and the method of warfare. For when Achilles returns to the field of battle after his ransom of Hector and his truce with Troy, in which Ulysses did not and could not take any part according to his ultimate conviction, the struggle of the two for the crown of heroship becomes more open and more acrid. Here is to be placed the song which Demodocus sang in Pheacia, whose theme was the strife between Ulysses and Achilles, "how they contended with mighty words at a grand festival of gods, the fame of which lay had reached high heaven". (*Odyssey* VIII, 73.) This openly manifested rupture between these two heroes and their tendencies would naturally occur in the *Post-Iliad*, when the inability of Achilles to take the walls of Troy had been so decisively shown by quite ten years' fighting before the still frowning Trojan battlements. To be sure the rivalry between the representatives of Brain and of Brawn lay implicit in the enter-

prise from the start, but now it has become violently explicit. We may well suppose that the inventive mind of Ulysses had already schemed some grand strategem for overcoming the hitherto insurmountable difficulty of the war, probably just the Trojan Horse. But he was for the present overruled by his competitor.

So Achilles of the Post-Iliad sallies forth to fresh conflicts against the new Trojan auxiliaries who have hastened to the city's defence. He slays the queen of those strange, perhaps prophetic woman-fighters, the Amazons, her name in later legend has been handed down as the heroine Penthesilea. Memnon, son of the dreamy Dawn, with his dark Ethiopians appears on the side of the Trojans (tawny-skinned peoples of the East are to-day arrayed with the Turks—another prophecy), and falls by the hand of Achilles. So the prolific Mythos of Troy keeps growing luxuriantly after the close of the Iliad, whereof the later Odyssey gives many a passing gleam. Finally Achilles himself is slain, and therein fulfils Hector's prophecy and his own—his early death being repeatedly foretold in the Iliad.

• But the hostile city remains still untaken, the supreme Hellenic deed has refused so far to get itself done. Indeed Achilles, the original Greek hero, became finally the grand obstacle. But now he has vanished, and forth steps Ulysses, the hero of mind, whereby he becomes the real hero of the enterprise against Troy. So many years it has

taken to evolve the right man for the crisis—an experience not unknown to-day.

Still opposition is not absent, the claim of brawn finds a fresh supporter in Ajax, a kind of caricature of the muscular principle in his huge corporeal mass of flesh. He challenges the new honor of Ulysses, loses the prize, and therewith also his mind, what little he has, for he goes crazy. Such is the mental outcome of this old Greek contest between Brain and Brawn, which is, however, eternal, for it is going on with increased virulence and assertive energy in our modernest history.

But the great fact now is that the intelligence of Ulysses has become the ruler of the highest Hellenic cause; the Trojan Horse is made, being built by mechanic Epeios, and through its means Troy falls. That was the sovereign theme which was intoned by the Ithacan bard Demodocus in his third lay, which he was prompted to sing by Ulysses himself.

It will be observed that after the *Iliad*, the Mythos of Troy has unfolded the biography of Ulysses to his supreme triumph, the capture of the hostile city. Such is what we have entitled his Trojan time, the ten years which he spent in the actual conflict which his mental sovereignty has at last brought to a victorious conclusion. It will be seen that his career has reached decidedly beyond the record of the *Iliad*, for he has openly to oppose, and ultimately to supplant the *Iliad*'s hero Achilles, whose limit he has transcended both in thought and deed.

What next? Ulysses having put down Troy, must now get back to Penelope and Ithaca, from whom he has so long been separated. Here then begins his Post-Trojan time, which has already been repeatedly designated as the Return, and which forms the subject of an entirely new poem, the *Odyssey*.

III. *The Post-Trojan Time of Ulysses.* Our faithful reader will not fail to note that we have now come back, in this biography of Homer, to the point where we started the present chapter, the Second, which bears the general title, *The Ulyssean Homer*. So this Post-Trojan Time of Ulysses has been already covered, in so far as it reveals the evolution of Homer's life, which subtly lurks in it under its mythical habit.

Moreover the pushing student of the poet's psychology, being in hot pursuit of the details of the whole Homeric development, will now turn more intently to the book, to the *Odyssey* itself, with the idea of tracing in its external events the indwelling autobiography of its poetic creator. According to the exact mathematics of ancient tradition, Ulysses is now passing through the third decade of his long Trojan experience, namely the ten years of his Return to "sunny Ithaca and prudent Penelope", with which the grand Mythos of the Trojan World-War comes to an end. Elsewhere in the foregoing pages we have treated of this Return of the Hero and its biographic purport. Thus the present essay has rounded itself out to its conclusion.

Still it should be emphasized that the *Odyssey* itself in its entirety is the work now to be taken in hand, organized, and thoroughly penetrated by thought till it becomes transparent in structure and meaning to its resolute reader. Literature helpful and otherwise, old and new, on the subject he will find in abundance. (It may be permitted here to say that the present author has elaborated with some fullness his views in his *Commentary on the Odyssey*.)

A word should here be added of the time when the foregoing account of Homer and his poetry with its enduring conflict was written. The subject was first taken up and composed during the summer of 1922 when the present war between Hellas and the Orient had started its desperate grapple, showing many bloody fluctuations from one side to the other along the Anatolian battle-front. So the author could not help seeing, though he stood on the other side of the globe, and also living in and through this fresh Trojan War, as it was but another renewed phase of the ancient Homeric struggle. Thus present history would keep flowing through his pen as the most vivid and best illustration of the old poem. Hence it results that to-day's world-conflict has become the truest explication and commentary ever yet composed by Time on Homer's work, and also on his life, which unfolds and expresses itself in his work.

Another reflection may be appended to the preceding remark. The Ulyssean Homer has trans-

mitted to all future ages in his Ulysses a world-character, a kind of universal man who reflects and embodies most fully his own time, yet therein casts an image of all time. For these three stages of him, which have just been considered, the Pre-Trojan, the Trojan, and the Post-Trojan, are quite as true of our generation to-day as they were of Homer's time, say eighty or ninety generations ago. Europe, our America, yea the whole world has just passed through a similar, in fact essentially the same experience. If we think about it for a moment, we find that we have elaborated the like nomenclature for the like historic conditions. Our own generation we hear divided everywhere, in our private talk and in the newspaper, into the pre-war time, the war years, and the after-war days, which we are living through just now, and in whose dark gigantic uncertainties we are shivering and struggling, like Ulysses in the cave of the monster Polyphemus. Still the poet signals us to imitate his hero with equal aspiration and hope, to the end that we too shall successfully make the grand Return to "sunny Ithaca and prudent Penelope".

Thus we rise to a new appreciation of the old Greek poet, who has so prophetically foreshown to us our own day and generation. He has given us in embryo the world's pre-war time of preparation with its presentiment of something big and dreadful about to happen; then he sings the war-time of actual conflict whose battle field is not now confined to the small Trojan plain, but circles quite the

whole earth-ball; finally he attunes into his hexametral music the post-war discord and strife sprung of the spirit's recoil in struggling to recover from man's demonic will to slay his fellow-man. So we are in the end to conceive the Ulyssean Homer as the world-poet unfolding in his poem a world-character with its three grand stages which are here named the Pre-Trojan, the Trojan, and the Post-Trojan.

But at this point we must not fail to remember that the poet, though his sovereign achievement, his *Iliad* and *Odyssey* be finished, is still alive and ready for his next task, or rather for his next stage of evolution. What will be the work of his old-age? The question naturally arose in antiquity, and had then a number of answers, all of which, however, belong to a much later time than that of the poet. Moreover for this last period of his career he has left no mythical song into which he has gleamed hints of his autobiography, such as we have traced in the two poems under his name. Still all tradition insists—rightly we think—upon giving him a third period which we may in part forecast and even reconstruct. Hence the aspiring reader will dare conceive, and perchance write for his own behoof, the unwritten Homer.

*CHAPTER THIRD.**THE CHIAN HOMER.*

Thus we have now to designate Homer after a locality, and not after the name of one of his heroes, as we have done hitherto. For this third stage or period of the poet is not set forth in any poem of his or in any documented record. So we have to conceive, from that which we already know of him, what Homer, still alive and active in his later years, would have done after he had completed his *Odyssey*. In other words we shall attempt to construe the poet now living his poem, and taking himself as his own hero.

The first point which we may set down in this new turn of his central life-line, is that he locates himself on the island of Chios, which is separated from the Anatolian mainland by a strait easy to cross and not difficult to be protected by the sea-faring Greek from the land-faring Oriental. On the opposite coast from Chios lies his old home town Smyrna, hugging an arm of the sea as its only hope. But thither Homer will not return in spite of its attractions, though he passed fruitful years there in writing his *Iliad*. He remembers only too well the ever-menacing fate suspended over that city by the Asiatic, especially by the Lydian, from which city he once fled after ominous experience. Moreover he has transcended his first warlike Achillean

period; yea, he has just completed his second adventurous Ulyssean voyage, and, as we believe, has composed it into a book, which we have still in its essential word and verse, structure and content. For it can only be the work of one supreme world-genius, gifted with the most subtle yet massive architectonic skill, as well as with loftiest poetic spontaneity.

Accordingly we conceive that the poet now makes his own personal return to his former East-Greek homeland, choosing for his new abode the better protected insular Chios. Our attentive reader will note that we have here again employed the pivotal word *Return*, which is now applied not to Ulysses but to his poet, to Homer himself, who moves spatially in the opposite direction, namely from West to East, as he did long ago in his youth when he migrated to Anatolia, doubtless from Northern Greece.

Hence for the poet this is likewise a spiritual Return, a poetical home-coming, in contrast to the westward home-coming of Ulysses who seeks to be restored to his family and country, to his original institutional life. Homer is that too, as we have fully recognized in his Ulyssean period. But he is more, much more than the wandering, returning Ulysses; he is the poet, the poet universal, even when he makes his Ulysses the singer of a particular and partial stage of himself, as we have already observed of his song of the Fableland in the Odyssey. But after this one bardic outbreak, Ulysses

quits his minstrelsy, for he has another more weighty duty, very practical and not poetical, the battle with the suitors in his own household—which ends his long line of adventures and their song.

Still the question will come up: why should this be called a spiritual Return for Homer—on what ground can Chios or Anatolia be regarded as the final goal of his aspiration, the last home of his genius? Here rises significantly the fact that in these Greek colonies and islands strown along the shores of Asia Minor, the earliest distinctive Hellenic civilisation put forth its primal flowering into communal life, and with the same began to bloom art and science. But especially the time's highest self-expression could only be given through poetry, which culminated in Homer. We have already noted the fact that Smyrna became the primordial center from which radiated the grand development of the people's favorite Mythus of Troy with its song and story. This Mythus unfolded to its highest point in the Iliad of Homer, ere he broke away on his wanderings westward, recorded mythically in the Odyssey.

But after experiencing and conceiving this poem, probably with portions of it already wrought out, he returns to his Anatolian folk which was then the most prosperous and most advanced, and also the most creative intellectually of the whole Hellenic world. Smyrna with its Mythus of Troy efflorescing and culminating in Homer was the scene of the earliest outburst of Greek genius in the dim

aforetime. But when Smyrna declined or was destroyed by the Lydian Alyattes, the cultural development of those Anatolian cities became centered in Ionic Miletus, which lay quite a distance to the south of Smyrna, and rose to a new world-historical distinction. For Occidental philosophy, science, history first budded out at Miletus some six or seven centuries before Christ, hence a good while after Homer. Thus Miletus became the home of prose rather than of poetry, of the thinker not of the singer, and so contrasts with the earlier song-minded Smyrna. Moreover we first hear of democracy at Miletus, a Greek word and thing destined to a great evolution down the ages till now, and to a still greater fulfilment in the future. Homer, however, as voiced by Ulysses, seems not to have loved the rule of the many (*polukoirania*), which shows one bad sample of itself already in the *Iliad*. (Book II, 201.) The mountain-summits of Greek civilisation may be seen in these three successive Ionic city-states—the myth-loving poetic Smyrna represented by Homer the philosophic and scientific Miletus represented by Thales, the universal Athens of Pericles.

Accordingly after the Return of Ulysses, who has been brought back by his poet successfully to his Ithaca, there must follow the Return of this poet himself, of the Ulyssean home-bringer, who has also to be restored to his homeland, which is in general Anatolia. It is no wonder, then, that many a floating legend seeks to locate Homer somewhere

in the cities and islands of the Eastern Egean, but not in the West, where practically the whole action of the poet's *Odyssey* has taken place. Thus the *Return of Homer Eastward* is the necessary complement and indeed counterpart of the *Return of Ulysses Westward*.

But what is the returned poet, an old man but still mentally active, to do with himself when he gets back home? We may suppose that his poetical work is essentially done, his *Iliad* and *Odyssey* achieved, and probably written out readable. For more and more the proof is accumulating that Homer's poems could have been set down in the early Greek alphabetic letters which were in use long before any century to which he is assigned. The former view that there existed no script for Homer's compositions, has with good reason lost most of its supporters. Hence it may be reasonably held that in Homer's school, which tradition so generally locates at Chios, there can have been some kind of primitive writing and reading, as well as memorizing and chanting the lays of the poet.

It is evident that the foregoing statement implies the sort of task which Homer took upon himself after his home-coming. He became the propagator and teacher of his art to a band of specially instructed disciples. It is remarkable what a unanimity of tradition exists on this point, so that it has become the most generally accepted fact in the life of Homer. The guild or singing sodality called *Homerids*, or sons of Homer, of

course his spiritual sons, seems to have brought to Chios her chief fame throughout historical Hellas. They claimed origin from the poet in mythical antiquity, and their activity extended during the documented ages of Greece, if we may judge from the many allusions in later Greek writers. And the name has come down to modern times, since Goethe called himself a Homerid in his classic enthusiasm, and sought to reproduce and even to complete the old Greek poet's masterpiece by a new *Achilleis*, as he calls his hexametral fragment.

Moreover an innate pedagogical bent can be traced everywhere throughout Homer, as we have repeatedly indicated in the foregoing account. What a long, loving, intimate record is that told in the *Iliad* about Phoenix the teacher of Achilles! In it seems to lurk a presentiment of what the poet is himself to become in the final stage of his life's evolution. Then the *Odyssey* may well be deemed one of the great educational books of the race, including in its school both young and old, son and father, Telemachus and Ulysses. Hence to the psychically penetrating reader of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the result appears most natural, yea necessary to their author's complete career, that he should become the poet-teacher of his own work as poet.

So much we may infer from Homer's actual statements concerning what he might do and become during the last period of his life. From world-poet to Chian schoolmaster—does not that

hint of a decadent senile lapse? So some may moot. But what if the other world-poets may be found passing through essentially the same spiritual estate in their old age? Of such a fact it is worth while to give some proof, inasmuch as for their lives historical evidence can be cited, which in Homer's case is not to be obtained.

To take Dante for a start: strikingly evident everywhere in his work is the pedagogical trend of his nature, which crops out both in his prose writings and in his poetry. But especially during his last years at Ravenna he opened his own school for instruction in literature, as his contemporary biographer Boccaccio indicates: "And here at Ravenna Dante by his teachings trained many pupils in poetry," certainly not omitting his own verses. So the Italian world-poet herein followed his elder Greek brother, assuredly not by way of imitation, but through the inner evolution of his spirit. Hence the significant co-incidence may well be pondered that Dante establishes a poetic school of Danteids for his final achievement, as ancient Homer is said to have founded his Chian school of singing Homerids.

Goethe has likewise the didactic undertow in his writings, as has often been remarked. In his *Wilhelm Meister* (Part Second) he actually organizes and describes what may be called a world-school called his Pedagogic Province. And in his old age his Weimar home became a sort of germinal institute for instructing his own people and indeed all

Europe, through his marvelous gift of oral and epistolary communication. But especially his *Conversations with Eckermann* show in happiest didactic expression this last phase of his life, when he looks back upon his career and reports its richest experience to the pupil whom he has selected to write the record. So Goethe also had in him the strain of the schoolmaster, and in his final period he kept a kind of school to impart his wisdom, especially poetical and literary, to the listeners who sought his presence from all corners of the world.

In such high poetic company we always think of Shakespeare, whose pedagogic vein is more hidden, being in dramatic disguise, but it is by no means absent. He plays the teacher repeatedly (see for instance Hamlet's lesson to the actors), satirizes pedants, and once he stages a full school of philosophy in imitation of Plato's Academe. The last four years of his life, which he passed at Stratford, and which would be the natural time for the old man's retrospective tutelage, are largely lost to us, but we may conceive him to have spent his time somewhat as did his illustrious compeers, Dante and Goethe, at the same age.

Accordingly there are some good reasons for thinking that the author of the Homeric poems opened a school somewhere, most probably in the island of Chios, after the completion of his work during his last years. First, there is a sort of unanimous tradition coming down from antiquity and seemingly reaching back to the poet's own

deed, that he established a kind of training institute for pupils studying his poetry, known as the Homerids of Chios. Secondly, these Homerids, often called also rhapsodes, are documented amply by later Greek writers—well does Plato know them, and introduce them into his dialogues. Thirdly, the native teaching-strain runs through all Homer, being most prominent in the *Odyssey*. Hence in his Chian school he best realized what lay implicitly throbbing in his spirit, which thus reaches at last its complete explicit fulfilment. Fourthly, the analogy between Homer and the succeeding supreme world-poets, whom we have cited, and who show a like didactic element in the closing period of their careers, may be regarded as throwing a light far back upon the similar, though unchronicled, stage of their elder brother of equal or perchance of even greater original genius.

Now this last deed of the poet may well be construed as a poetic deed of which the poet himself is the hero. But he has not sung this his ultimate life-deed in his own name, though he has done it, and done it so completely that his resultant school has lasted till to-day in one form or other. For are we not studying him just now, being pupils in the school of Homer?

So we are next to conceive and to construe, if possible, not an *Iliad* or *Odyssey*, but an *Homeriad*, the epic of Homer as poet, how he got to be what he was, winning and singing the grand themes of his song, till he, as aged bard, looks back at and

tells of himself in his scholastic retreat at Chios. Thus he is shown with a completed self-evolution, whereof he casts many prophetic gleams in his two poems, which from this height of survey will again reveal their subtle filaments of autobiography.

But in what form is such a poetic record of the poet himself to be set down? Herein he has given the cue; the singer must be sung about in his own measure, which is the hexameter. To be sure his language is Greek, while ours is English; but the inner music of that antique hexametral movement can certainly be suggested, if not wholly reproduced in our Anglo-Saxon speech. Any other sort of verse for the present theme would be a metrical misfit, a downright rhythmic discord from the start, shocking to all deeper Homeric attunement.

There has been much controversy over the use of the hexameter for English verse, and two opposite opinions are still heard. Here is not the place for such disputation. As to ourselves, however, we employ what may be called the free English hexameter unfettered by strict classic precedent, though we preserve the recurrence at the end of the sixth measure. Within this limit each foot may have two or three syllables, which again can be either long or short. Not pedantically confined to dactyl and spondee; so we have no objection to the anapest or even to the tribrach, not to the iamb or even to the pyrrhic. In fact the real Homeric hexameter can be shown to be the foregoing free hexameter, which the grammarians and especially the Latin

poets headed by Virgil have thrust into its classic straitcoat of prosody, and made march according to the strict military order of Roman discipline. The hexameter adopted in the following poem is, therefore, more unfettered than the one prescribed by the well-known rules of Matthew Arnold, or even than the one so successfully and popularly employed by Longfellow, which nevertheless has roused the impotent scorn of such narrow precisians as Swinburne and Saintsbury, supposed leading authorities on English versification.

It remains to be added that the following attempt to reconstruct the Chian period of Homer reaches back more than thirty years from the present time, and was the product of what might be called an Homeric movement in the West, which sought to restore the old poet to his true place as one of the Literary Bibles of the Race. At that time the conflict in the East along the Trojan battle-line was quiescent, though not without menacing murmurs. But this October morning of 1922, while taking our last piece of manuscript to the printer, we read in the newspaper that not merely the Greek and the Turk, but Europe and Asia are standing in hostile array, with weapons pointed at each other—where and for what? The first, most impressive, and still enduring answer to both questions is to be found in Homer, strangely growing more and more prophetic in his poesy with the fall of the centuries.

HOMER IN CHIOS

1.

*Old Homer shows a young face to the boy,
And hands him in love a beautiful toy;
But to the full grown man
He reveals God's plan.*

2.

*The eye was begotten a sun-seer
Else it could never see the light;
The soul was begotten a God-seer,
Else it could never see the right.*

Appleseed's Rhymes.

HOMER IN CHINA

Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1891,

By DENTON J. SNIDER,

in the office of Librarian of Congress, Washington.

Prologue

Salute to Chios.

I. The Voyage.

Hail, O Chios of Homer, thou risest an islanded
poem

Whose weird runes from my boat in a rapt vision
I read.

All the sea is a smile and a twinkle is every
wavelet,

Cheerily flaps the white sails big with the favor-
ing breeze,

And the ship—the new ship—plows away to the
goal of her voyage,

While the steersman in sport dallies with water
and wind.

Merrily under the touch of the rudder is rocking
the vessel,

Rising a little above, falling a little below,

Daring to dance on the sea with the billow and
romp with the sunbeam,

While the wares in the hold safely to haven it
heaves.

Sing, Hexameter! yours is the voyage, now rock
with the vessel,

One with the roll of the waves, one with the
storm and the calm.

Be ye the soul at the helm, and be too the voice
of the helmsman,

Be ye the sea and its song, present and future
and past.

II. The Sea-God Appears.

Royal Poseidon has harnessed his horses to his
blue chariot,

White flow their manes in the wind as they are
racing to shore;

On the surface they play with the infinite move-
ment of water,

Dancing the dance of the sea over the caroling
waves;

But as soon as they brush underneath on the
strand's pebbly bottom,

Broken and foaming they fall headlong against
the hard beach.

Noble thy steeds, O Poseidon, and ever the more
to be valued,

That no feet they possess which can step out of
the sea.

III. The Sea Festival.

Festive processions of Nereids drawn by silver-
reined dolphins

Wind in the curls of the sea, curled by soft
Zephyrus' hand;

Shell-blowing Tritons rise up and announce the
approach of Poseidon,

Then sink under the tide to the hoarse note of
their shells.

Look o'er waves to the line of yon blue, 'tis a
festival splendid,
Thousand of deities hoar float round Poseidon's
moist car.

IV. Sea-born Aphrodite Rises.

There! why bursts up skyward that passionate
mountain of sea-foam,

In whose bosom are whirled all the wild shapes
of the waves?

Look! a white statue out of the spray is gleaming
like marble

Which just hewn upheaves from the hid work-
shop of seas!

Now in the warring waters the beautiful Goddess
of Beauty

High on her pedestal stands, though all afloat in
her love!

So the God's trident hath not the sole power to
rule on the Ocean,

For a fair girdle I saw fondled and kissed by the
waves;

Each of them sought it, lovingly pressed it a
moment, then lost it;

O the great hand of the sea, how it would clutch
for the prize,

Trying to hold in its watery grasp that girdle
inconstant,

Which through its fingers would slip—vain was
the task of a God.

Laughing it swayed to the rise and the fall of the
 refluent bosom
 Sprung of the billowy spume; here Aphrodite
 once rose,
Here now she rises again from the wave and is free
 of her sea-robe,
 Stands at the helm of the ship, changes its course
 to her spell.
Landing she leads to the garden where dreams the
 daughter of Homer,
 Beautiful maiden whose love still is the poet's
 own soul.
Thus slips into that bower of bardlings sly
 Aphrodite
 Who as Goddess will teach even in Homer's own
 school.

V. *Homeric Vision.*

Thou must behold in the sea not merely the sea
 but the image
 Mirrored down in the deep, changing to forms
 of the Gods;
Water, as water, is neutral, is nothing, without its
 reflection—
 Nymphs gaily plashing the brook, Nereids skim-
 ming the seas.
But if no Deity thou canst behold in the rill or the
 ocean,
 Chios will flee from thy look, Homer will ban
 thee unschooled.

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I.

Mnemosyne.

The Making of The Poet.

ARGUMENT.

HOMER, the poet, having returned in old age to Chios, his birth-place, an island not far from the coast of Asia Minor, tells the story of his early life to his pupils. Two chief influences wrought upon his childhood. The first was that of the smith, Chalcon, who was both artisan and artist — both vocations in early times were united in one man — and who revealed to the budding poet the forms of the Gods. The second influence was that of his mother, Crethéis (name given by Herodotus, Vita Hom). She was the depository of fable and folk-lore, which she told to her boy in the spirit of a poet, and which are the chief materials of his two great poems. So Homer reaches back to his earliest years by the aid of Mnemósyne (memory), who according to Hesiod (Theogon. 915) was the mother of the Nine Muses.

“ Fair was the day when I first peeped into the
workshop of Chalcon,
Chalcon, the smith, who wrought long ago in the
city of Chios;
Now that day is the dawn of my life, which I yet
can remember,
All my hours run back to its joy as my very be-
ginning,
And one beautiful moment then let in the light
of existence,
Starting within me the strain that thrills through
my days to this minute!
Still the old flash I can see as I peeped at the
door of the workshop,
Memory whispers the tale of the rise of a world
that I saw there
Memory, muse of the past, is whispering faintly
the story.

Chalcon the smith, far-famed in the sun-born
island of Chios,
Stood like a giant and pounded the bronze in the
smoke of his smithy,
Pounded the iron until it would sing in a tune
with the anvil,
Sing in a tune with the tongs and the anvil and
hammer together,
Making the music of work that rang to the ends
of the city.
Figures he forced from his soul into metal, most
beautiful figures,
Forced them by fury of fire beneath cunning
strokes of the hammer ;
As he thought them, he wrought them to loveliest
forms of the living,
Wrought them to worshipful shapes of the Gods,
who dwell on Olympus.
That was when I was still but a child in the home
of my mother,
Sole dear home of my life, the home of Crethéis
my mother !
Only two doors from his shop with its soot stood
her clean little cottage,
Vainly she strove to restrain her clean little boy
from the smithy,
But he would slip out the house and away, as
soon as she washed him,
Off and away to the forge just where the smutch
was the deepest.

How I loved the great bellows puffing its breath
on the charcoal!

And the storm of the sparkles that lit up the
smithy with starlight!

And the hiss of the iron red-hot when thrust into
water!

Greatest man in the world I deemed at that time
to be Chalcon,

And his smithy to me rose up a second Olym-
pus,

Where the Gods and the Heroes I saw move forth
into being;

Him too deemed I divine, like Hephæstus, a God
in his workshop.

As he thought, so he wrought — he pounded and
rounded the metal

Till it breathed and would move of itself to a
corner and stand there,

Till it spoke, and speaking would point up beyond
to Immortals.

Bare to the waist and shaggy the breast of the
big-boned Chalcon,

As it heaved with an earthquake of joy in the
shock of creation;

Thick were the thews of his arm and balled at
each blow till his shoulder,

At the turn of his wrist great chords swelled out
on his fore-arm,

One huge hand clasped the grip of the tongs in
its broad bony knuckles,

Th'other clutched hold of the sledge and whirled
it around by the handle;
Shutting his jaws like a lion, and grating his
teeth in his fury,
Whirled he the ponderous sledge to hit in the
heat of the iron;
While the veins underneath would heave up the
grime on his forehead,
Smote he the might of the metal with all the grit
of a Titan;
Working mid flashes of flame that leaped out the
belly of darkness,
Smote he and sang he a song in response to the
song of his hammer."

So spake aged Homerus, the bard, as he sat in
his settle,
Where grew a garden of fruit, the fig and the
pear and the citron,
Grapes suspended in clusters and trees of the
luscious pomegranate.
He had returned to his home with a life full of
light and of learning;
Wandering over the world, he knew each country
and city,
Man he had seen in the thought and the deed, the
Gods he had seen too;
Home he had reached once more, the violet
island of Chios,
Blind, ah blind, but with sight in his soul and a
sun in his spirit.

Youths were standing around him and hearkened
to what he was telling,
Bright-eyed youths, who had come to his knees
from each region of Hellas,
Homerids hopeful of song, the sons of the genius
of Homer,
By the new tale of Troy inspired, they sought to
make measures,
Striving to learn of the master to wield the
hexameter mighty,
As high Zeus the thunderbolt wields in a flash -
through the Heavens,
Leaping from cloud unto cloud and leaving long
lines of its splendor,
Rolling the earth in its garment of resonant
reverberation.
Luminous too was the look of the boys, lit up
by the Muses,
Eager they turned to the sage, and begged for
the rest of his story;
Soon into musical words he began again spinning
his life-thread:

“Chalcon, the smith, was the maker of Gods
in the smoke of his smithy!
Out of darkness he wrought them, out of chaos
primeval,
Striking great blows that lit up the night with
the sparks of creation

Which would flash from his mind into metal
through strokes of the hammer.
Aye, and the maker of me in his Gods he was
also — that Chalcon;
He perchance did not know it — the world he
was mightily making.
All the Graces he wrought into shape, and loved
as he wrought them,
And the Fates he could form in his need, though
he never did love them,
But the snake-tressed Furies he banished in hate
from his workshop.
I could always forecast what he wrought and
whether it went well,
Whether full freely the thought ran out of his
soul to the matter,
For he would sing at his work an old Prome-
thean ditty.
Tuneful, far-hinting it poured from his soul into
forms of his God-world,
Strong deep notes which seemed to direct each
sweep of the hammer,
Just at the point where a stroke might finish the
work of the master,
Or a blow ill-struck might shatter a year of his
labor.
Then bright notes would well from within as he
filed and he chiseled,
Seeking to catch and to hold in a shape the
gleam of his genius.

Battles he pictured in silver and gold on the
shield of the warrior,
Corselets he plaited in proof and swords he
forged for the Hero,
Many a goblet he made wreathed round with the
frolic of Bacchus,
All the Gods he could fashion to life, in repose
and in motion,
Their high shapes he could call from his soul, to-
gether and singly,
Call with their godhood down from the heights of
the radiant Heavens,
Till the dingy old smithy shot into Olympian
sunshine.
Chalcon, Oh Chalcon, me thou hast formed in
forming Immortals,
And the song of thy hammer I hear in the ring
of my measures,
Oft I can feel thee striking thy anvil still in my
heart-strokes,
Which are forging my strains like thee when thou
smotest the metal,
Till it rang and it sang the strong tune of the
stress of thy labor.
Chalcon, thy workshop went with me in every
turn of my travel,
Through the East and the West of wide Hellas,
through island and mainland,
Through the seas in the storm, through mount-
ains rolling in thunder,

With me it went in my wandering, e'en to the
top of Olympus:
Never thy shapes shall fade from the sight of my
soul, Oh Chalcon."

Quickly the poet turned round in his seat and
said to his servant:
"Come, Amyntas my boy, now bring some wine
in my goblet,
Chian wine in my goblet wrought by the cunning
of Chalcon,
Which he gave to me once when I sang him my
earliest measures,
Round which are dancing the youths at the tast-
ing the must of the wine-press,
While the God overgrown with leaves and with
vines looks laughing;
Chalcon gave it me once as a prize when I sang
in his workshop,
Sang him my earliest measures in tune to the
strokes of his hammer."

Beardless Amyntas, the cup bearer, brought the
chalice of Chian,
Choicest of wine, that sparkled and danced on
the rim of the chalice,
Draught of the sea, and the earth, and the sun-
shine together commingled,
Liquid poesy, stealthily sung in each drop by the
wine-god.

Softly the singer sipped off the glittering beads
of the beaker,
Touching his lip to the line where the rim and
the brim come together,
Where flash twinkles of joy and laugh in the eye
of the drinker.
That was the essence of Chios distilled from
the heart of her mountains,
Tempered hot in the fires that smoulder still in
the soil there,
Drawn by the grape into drops that shoot into
millions of sparkles,
Generous vintage of Chios, renewing the heart of
the singer.

When his thirst he had slaked and his thought
had returned to his thinking,
Sweetly he lowered his voice to the note of a mu-
sical whisper,
And he bent forward his body as if he were
telling a secret :
“Once, I remember, Chalcon was making a group
of the Muses,
Sacred givers of song, to be borne to a festival
splendid,
Where each singer had in their presence to
sing for the laurel.
What do you think he did as I stood with him
there in the smithy?

Me he turned into bronze, and put me among the
 Nine Sisters,
As if I their young brother might be, their one
 only brother;
In the center he placed me, aye in the heart of
 the Muses,
Sweet Calliope kissed me there in the workshop
 of Chalcon,
Even in bronze I could feel her embrace on that
 day—I now feel it—
And I could hear her soft breathings that told of
 the deeds of the Heroes.
Still I can feel, e'en though I be old, the kiss of
 the Muses,
And at once I respond to their music in words of
 my measures,
Yielding my heart and my voice to their prompt-
 ings and gentle persuasion.
O good Chalcon, memory keeps thee alive, as I
 love thee!
Keeps thee working in me as the maker who is
 the poet;
Ever living thou art in thy glorious shapes of
 Immortals,
Though thou, a mortal by Fate, hast gone to the
 Houses of Hades,
Whither I too must soon go—the call I can
 hear from the distance,
I too a mortal by Fate must pass to the shades
 of my Heroes.”

There he paused on the tremulous thought of a
hope and a sorrow,
And the sweet word died away on his lips thrown
far in the future.
Hark! the voice of a song creeps into the house
of Homerus,
Filling his home with love and with life to the
measure of music,
Fresh from the youth of the heart, the fountain
of hope everlasting.
Though unseen the sweet singer, hidden in
leaves of an arbor,
All the youths well knew who it was, and stood
for a moment,
Bating the breath and bending the head to listen
the better,
And to quaff each note to the full, for the voice
that was singing
Poured out the soul of a maiden, the beautiful
daughter of Homer,
Whom those boys were more eager to hear than
to study their verses,
Aye, more eager to hear the daughter than
hearken the father.

He, when the strain had ceased, with a sigh
broke into the silence:
“Ah! the fleet years! how like is that note to
the note of my mother,

As she hymned to her work or sang me to sleep
on her pallet!
Early my father had died, his face I no longer
remember,
But the voice which speaks when I speak from
my heart is always —
Well do I know it — the voice of my mother,
Crethéis my mother ! ”

Overmastered a moment by tears, he soon
overmastered
All of the weaker man in himself, and thus he
proceeded:
“ I was telling the tale of the wonderful work-
shop of Chalcon,
Where I saw all the deities rise into form in
a rapture,
Coming along with their sunshine to stand in the
soot of the smithy,
Happy Olympian Gods who once fought and put
down the dark Titans.
Bearing their spell in my soul, I always went
home to my mother,
And I would beg her to tell me who were the
Gods and the Muses,
All this beautiful folk whom Chalcon had brought
from the summits,
From free sunny Olympus down into the smother-
ing smithy.

She would begin with a glow in her eyes and tell
me their story,
Meanwhile plying the distaff — she never could
help being busy —
All of their tales she knew, by the hundreds and
hundreds she knew them,
Tales of the beings divine, once told of their
dealings with mankind,
When they came to our earth and visibly mingled
with mortals.
New was always the word on the tongue of
Crethéis my mother,
Though she dozens of times before had told the
same story,
Still repeating when I would call for it, ever re-
peating,
For a good tale, like the sun, doth shine one day
as the other.
What a spell on her lip when up from her lap I
was looking,
Watching her mouth in its motion, whence drop-
ped those wonderful stories!
Oft I thought I could pick up her word in my
hand as it fell there,
Keep it and carry it off, for my play a most beau-
tiful plaything,
Which I could toss on the air when I chose, like
a ball or an apple,
Catch it again as it fell in its flight, for the word
was a thing then.

Mark! what I as a child picked up, the old man
still plays with:

Words made of breath, but laden with thought
more solid than granite,

Pictures of heroes in sound that lasts, when
spoken, forever,

Images fair of the world and marvelous legends
aforetime,

All of them living in me as they fell from the
lips of my mother."

There he stopped for a moment and passed his
hand to his forehead,

As if urging Mnemosyne now for the rest of
the story;

Soon came the Muse to the aid of the poet, and
thus he continued:

"How she loved the songs of old Hellas, and
loved all its fabling!

Well she could fable herself and color her speech
with her heart-beats.

I have known her to make up a myth which
spread through all Chios,

Thence to island and mainland wherever Hellenic
is spoken.

Once I heard far out by the West in a town of
Zakynthus,

At a festival one of her lays, which I knew in
my cradle,

Sung by the bard of the town as his guerdon of
song from the Muses.

And now let me confess, too, my debt, the debt
of my genius!

Many a flash of the fancy is hers which you read
in my poems,

Many a roll of the rhythm, and many a turn of
the language,

Many a joy she has given, and many a tear she
has dropped there,

Merciful sighs at the stroke of grim Fate on the
back of the mortal —

All are remembrances fallen to me from the lips
of my mother.”

For a moment he ceased, till he gathered his
voice into firmness,

Smoothing the tremulous trill that welled from
his heart into wavelets,

Smoothing and soothing the quivering thoughts
which Memory brought him:

“Hard was her lot, she had to work daily
through Chios by spinning,

For herself and her boy she fought the rough
foes of existence,

Making her living by toil that flew from the tips
of her fingers,

Deft and swift in the cunning which gives all
its worth unto labor.

Yet more cunning she showed in spinning the
 threads of a story
Till they all came together forming a garment of
 beauty,
Than in twirling the distaff and reeling the yarn
 from the spindle.
But she too, my poor mother, was laid in the
 earth, as was fated,
For the Fates span out the frail thread of her
 life at their pleasure.”

Here again the old man made a stop with a
 gaze in his features
As if prying beyond to behold the unspeakable
 secret;
But he came back to himself with a joy in his
 look and continued :
“ It was she who gave me the love and the lore
 of the legend,
Training my youth to her song which throbbed
 to the best of the ages —
All the great men of the Past and great women,
 the mothers of Heroes.
Do you know it was she who first told me the
 story of Thetis —
Thetis the Goddess-Mother, whose son was the
 Hero Achilles?
Tenderly told she the tale of the boy who was
 born to do great things,

Who from his birth had in him the spark divine
 of his mother,
Though he had to endure all the sorrow of being
 a hero,
Suffer the pang that goes with the gift of the
 Gods to a mortal.
Then in a frenzy of hope she would clasp me
 unto her bosom,
Dreaming the rest of her dream in the soft in-
 spiration of silence,
Yet you could see what it was by the light that
 was lit in her presence,
See it all by the light of her soul that shone from
 her visage.
Once in her joy she arose with her arms out-
 stretched mid her story,
Showing how Thetis arose from the deeps in a
 cloud o'er the billow,
That she, the Goddess, might secretly take her
 son to her bosom,
To impart what was best of herself — the godlike
 endurance —
And to arouse in him too the new valor to meet
 the great trial.
O fond soul of my mother, how well that day
 I remember,
When thou toldest the tale of the bees that flew
 to my cradle,
Dropping out of the skies on a sudden along with
 the sunbeams,

Humming and buzzing through all of the house
as if they were swarming,
Till they lit on my lips as I slept but never once
stung me,
Never stung thee, though running around in thy
fright to defend me,
Smiting and slashing with stick or with rag or
whatever came handy,
Scorching at last their leathery wings with their
own waxen tapers !
But ere they flew, in spite of the fire and fight of
the household,
They had left on my lips their cells of the clear-
flowing honey,
Honey clear-flowing and sweet, though bitter the
struggle to give it;
Even the bees had to pay for giving the gift of
their sweetness.

Then wert thou happy, Cretheis, then wert thou
sad too, my mother,
Pensive, forethinking afar on what the God had
intended,
Who had sent the dumb bee to speak as a sign
unto mortals.
What thy son was to do and endure flashed into
thy vision,
Double that flash of the future, joyful, sorrow-
ful also,

And thou didst say to thyself and the God, bending
over to kiss me:

‘ Let it fall — the lot of his life ; I feel what is
coming :

He must distil from the earth into speech all the
sweetness of living,

He must pour from his heart into song all the
nectar of sorrow ;

Let it fall — the lot of his life ; though hard be
the trial,

Always there will be left on his lips the hive of
its honey.’ ”

II.

Calliope.

The Call of The Muse.

ARGUMENT.

Homer now tells the third chief influence which helped make him a poet. This influence was the bard of the town, Ariston, who sang on the borderland between East and West, but was not able to sing of the great conflict between Troy and Greece. It was Ariston who suggested this theme to Homer, and bade the youth go out to the sea-shore, where was the cave of the Muses, and listen to the voice which would speak to him there. Calliope, the epic Muse, appears to him, tells him what he must do and suffer, and inspires him with his great vocation. He goes home to his mother and tells her what the Muse has said to him; his mother after a short internal struggle, bids him go at once and follow the call of the Muse.

Thus to the whisper of fleeting Mnemosyne,
mother of Muses,
Homer was yielding his heart and shaping her
shadowy figures.
While he was speaking, rose up the roar of the
sea in the distance,
Which an undertone gave to his measures, mighty,
majestic,
Wreathing the roll of its rhythm in words of the
tale he was telling,
Giving the musical stroke of its waves to the
shore of the island,
Giving the stroke for the song to the beautiful
island of Chios.
All the sea was a speech, and spoke in the lan-
guage of Homer,

Aye, the Ægean spoke Greek, and sang the re-
frain of great waters,
All the billows were singing that day hexameters
rolling,
Rolling afar from the infinite sea to the garden
of Homer.

Stopped in the stretch of his thought the poet
lay back in his settle,
Seemingly lost in the maze where speech fades out
into feeling ;
He was silent awhile, though not at the end of
his story.
Aged and blind he was now, recalling the days
of his boyhood,
When he saw all the world of fair forms, as it
rose up in Hellas,
Rise from the hand of the smith and rise from
the lips of his mother,
Saw too himself in the change of the years be-
coming the singer.

Soon spake a youth at his side, it was the best
of his pupils,
Called Demodocus, son of Demodocus, Ithacan
rhapsode,
Who belonged to an ancestry born into song from
old ages :
“ Did you have no bard of the village, no teacher
of measures,

Who could melt the rude voice of the people to
rhythm of music?
Men of that strain we have in our Ithaca, they
are my clansmen.
Still I follow the craft, and to thee, best singer,
I come now,
That I be better than they, far better in song
than my fathers.’’

Here he suddenly stopped and glanced out into
the garden,
For there flitted an airy form of a maid in the
distance,
Going and coming amid the flowers—the
daughter of Homer,
Whom Demodocus loved and sought as the meed
of his merit,
He would carry away not only the verse of the
master,
But would take, in the sweep of his genius, also
the daughter.
Yet the maiden held off, declaring the youth was
conceited.

But the father in words of delight replied to
his scholar:
“ Well bethought ! a good learner ! thou thinkest
ahead of the teacher !
Just of the bard I was going to speak, he rose in
my mind’s eye

Suddenly with thy question — the face and the
form of Ariston.

Every day I went to the place of the market to
hear him —

Deep-toned Ariston, the singer of praises to Gods
and to Heroes,

Chanting the fray and the valorous deed in the
ages aforetime,

While the crowd stood around in reverent si-
lence and listened.

He was the bard of the town, he knew what had
been and will be,

Knew the decree of Zeus and could read it out of
the Heavens,

Knew too, the heart of man, and could tell every
thought in its throbbing.

At the festivals sang he through all of the ham-
lets of Chios,

He was the voice of the isle, the mythical hoard
of old treasures;

Song and story and fable, even the jest and the
riddle —

All were his charge and his choice, by the care
and the call of the Muses.

High beat his heart as he poured out its music
singing of Heroes,

Every word of his voice was a tremulous pulse-
beat of Hellas,

Doomful the struggle he saw in the land and fate-
ful its Great Men.

Often he sang the sad lot of Bellerophon, hero
of Argos,
Who once crossed to the Orient, leaving the
mainland of Europe,
Quitting his home in the West for the charm of
a Lycian maiden,
Daughter fair of the king who dwelt by the ed-
dying Xanthus.
Many a demon he slew, destroying the shapes of
the ugly,
Savages tamed he to beautiful law, and the law,
too, of beauty,
Monsters, Chimeras, wild men and wild women
he brought to Greek order,
Amazons haters of husbands, and Solymi mount-
aincers shaggy.
But the Hero, for such is his fate, sank to what
he subjected,
In the success of his deed he lapsed and fell under
judgment,
Hateful to Gods is success, though much it is
loved by us mortals,
Victory is the trial, most hard in the end to the
victor.

Such was the strain of Ariston, here on the
borderland singing
Where two continents stand and look with a scowl
at each other
Over the islanded waters, ready to smite in the
struggle.

Every Greek in our Chios then heard Bellerophon's echo,
Heard in the deep-sounding name of the Hero an echo that thrilled him,
Felt in his bosom the reverberation of Bellerophon-
tes,
For he could find in himself the same peril of lapsing from Hellas,
Sinking to Asia back from the march of the world to the westward."

Sympathy touched in its tenderest tone the voice of Homerus,
As his words sank down at the end of the line to a whisper,
Then to a silence, the silence of thought, which spoke from his presence.
What was the matter with Homer, and why that shadow in sunshine?
Did he find in his own Greek soul a gleam of the danger?
Did his poetical heart then enter the trance of temptation?
He must respond to the passion, aye to the guilt, in his rapture,
He must glow with the deed of the Hero, even the wrongful,
Never forgetting the law, and sternly pronouncing the judgment.

Soon he rallied and rose, and his voice returned
with his story :

‘ Well I knew the old man and eagerly stored up
his treasures,

Aged Ariston loved me, and made me his daily
companion,

I was his scholar, perchance, as ye are now in my
training.

Once in a mutual moment of freedom I ventured
to ask him :

‘ O my Ariston, sing me to-day the new song
of our nation,

Born of the deed, the last great deed we have all
done together,

All the Hellenes have done it, methinks, in the
might of one impulse,

Fighting our destiny’s fight to possess and pre-
serve the new future,

Saving the beautiful woman and saving ourselves
in her safety ;

That is the deed of Troy and its lay of the Hero
Achilles !

Seek not so far for an action when near in thy
way is the greatest.’

Thus I spake, and his face on the spot turned
into a battle.

‘ Ah ! ’ he replied ‘ too near me it lies, just
that is the hindrance !

I must leave it behind to another, for I cannot
touch it;
Still my heart is cleft by that terrible struggle
asunder,
Wounded I was in the strife, remediless still I am
bleeding,
Cureless I feel it to be — that wound of the
Greeks and the Trojans!
I was on both sides during the war, and yet upon
neither,
Standing aloof from each, yet standing with one
and the other,
With father Priam of Troy as well as with Greek
Agamemnon —
Tossed to this part or that, and torn into shreds
by the Furies;
Greeks had my brain on their side, the Trojans
had hold of my heart-strings;
With that breach in my soul, how could I make
any music?
I cannot stand the stress, the horrible stress of
the struggle
Always renewed in my song whose every word is
a blood-stain.
But hereafter the man will arise who is able to
sing it,
Healing the wound in himself and the time,
which in me is unhealing;
One shall come and sing of that mightiest deed
of the Argives,

He shall arise, the poet of Hellas — the man hath
arisen

Who will take it and mould it and make it the
song of the ages.

Youth, be thou singer of Troy and the war for
the beautiful Helen,

Sing of the Hero in wrath, and reconciled sing
of the Hero!’

Thus spoke Ariston the bard; what a life he
started within me!

Chaos I was, but the sun of a song had smitten
the darkness,

And my soul bore a universe, with one word as a
midwife,

That was the word of the poet, who spoke as
the maker primeval,

Calling the sun and the earth from the void, and
the firmament starry.

Always welfare he brought to the people who
hearkened his wisdom,

And he was ever alive with the thought of bring-
ing a blessing,

Climbing the height of the highest Gods, where
dwells freedom from envy.

After deep silence, the mother of good, he sol-
emnly added:

Now is the moment to seek the divinity’s
sign for thy calling,

Godlike the token must be, for of Gods is the
 breath of the singer ;
Go to the grot of the sweet-voiced Muses down
 by the sea-side
Where old Nereus scooped out of stone his son-
 orous cavern,
Sounding the strains of a lyre that is played by
 the hands of great waters,
As they incessantly strike on the sands and the
 shells and the rock walls,
Reaching out from the heart of the sea for a
 stroke of their fingers,
Just for one stroke of their billowy fingers, then
 broken forever,
Playing the notes of a song that can only be
 heard by a poet.
There thou wilt hear, if it also be thine, the voice
 of the Muses,
Who will give thee their golden word and the
 high consecration ;
But if it be not within thee already, they will be
 silent,
Silence is the command of the God to seek them
 no further ;
Then thou wilt hear in their house by the sea but
 a roar and a rumble,
But a roar and a rumble of godless waters in
 discord ;
Wheel about in thy tracks, perchance thou wilt
 make a good cobbler.'

Not yet cold was the word when I started and
came to the cavern;
Set with many a glistening gem overhead in the
ceiling,
Decked with sculpture of stone cut out on its
sides by the Naiads,
Making a gallery fair of the forms of the Gods
of the waters,
Round whose feet mid the tangle and fern were
playing the mermaids,
Smiting the wine-dark deep, as they dived from
the sight of the sea-boys,
Smiting the blue-lit billows above into millions
of sparkles,
Into millions of cressets that lit up the cavern
like starlight,
Secret cavern of love for the nymphs, the watery
dwellers,
Echoing music afar of the kiss of the earth and
the ocean.
Well I knew the recess for often before I had
been there,
Oft I had heard the report that told of the sil-
very swimmers,
Told of the maidens and youths who loved far
under the billows,
Loved one another far under the billows and sang
the sweet love song,
Swimming around in the grotts and the groves of
deep Amphitrite,

Or reclining to rest on the couch of the pearl or
the coral.

There I had seen in the sunset the car of hoary
- Poseidon,
Skimming across the wave with his train to his
watery temple
Over the golden bridge of the sunbeams that lay
on the ripples,
Bridge that lay on the ripples ablaze in the sheen
of Apollo,
Spanning the stretch of the sea from Chios away
to the sundown.

There I had seen old Proteus, changeful God of
the waters,
Forming, transforming himself, the one, into
shapes of all being,
Into the leaf-shaking tree and into the shaggy-
maned lion,
Creeping reptile, blazing fire, and flowing water;
Still I saw him, the one and the same, under-
neath all his changes.

There I had seen the beautiful Nereid, daugh-
ter of Nereus,
Chased by the sinuous Triton, the man of the sea
in his passion,
Who would snort in his fury whenever the mer-
maid escaped him,
Spouting the foam of his rage up into the face
of the heavens,

Rising and shaking his billowy curls and blowing
his sea-horn.

There I lay down on a pallet of stone and slid
into slumber,
While I was sleeping, stood up before me a troop
of fair women,
Nine of them, sisters who sang in a circle, they
were the Muses,
Singing along with their mother, Mnemosyne,
who was the tenth one,
Who would always give them the hint of the
matter and music,
Looking backward she gave to the Muses the
beat of the present.
Soon they arose into beautiful shapes from the
strains of the cavern,
Quite as once I had seen them arise in the
smithy of Chalcon,
Taking divinity's form in the strokes of his
dexterous hammer.
One of them stepped from the group, alto-
gether the tallest and fairest,
And she kissed me; it was Calliope who in the
cavern
Gave me again the sweet kiss that I felt in
the smoke of the smithy;
But her lips began moving with words in the
twilight of dreamland,

And with a smile she stretched out her hand and
spake me her message:

‘ Hail, O son of Cretheis, doubly the son of thy
mother,

Son of her mythical soul and son of her beautiful
body,

Hearken, dear youth, to our call, for thou hast
been chosen the master,

Thee we endow with all of our gifts of speech
and of spirit,

But take heed of the warning, henceforth be ready
to suffer ;

Mark it ! along with each gift the Gods have a
penalty given,

For each good that they grant unto mortals,
strict is the payment ;

Not without toil is the gift of the Muses, not
without sorrow ;

Nay, a Fury is thine, called Sympathy, rending
thy bosom,

Making the fate of the human thine own in the
song which thou singest ;

Into the stroke of thy heart we have put each
pang of the mortal,

Which will throb and respond in a strain to the
cry of the victim ;

Answer thou must in agony every twinge of his
torture,

Pass through his sorrow of soul, and leap with
the sting of his body ;

And when he goes down to death, thou living
must go along with him,
Go to the uttermost region beyond the line of
the sunset,
Living descend to the dead and speak in the
Houses of Hades.

Now thou must wander; thy path runs over
each mountain of Hellas,
Over the river and plain to the site of each ham-
let and city,
That thou see all its people and hear them tell
their own story;
Not till then art thou fitted to sing the great song
of Achæa.

First to Troy thou must pass and look at the
plain and the ruins,
Thou wilt hear on the air the fierce clangor of
arms in the onset,
Hear the groans of the wounded, the shouts of
the victor and vanquished,
Hear the voice of the graves by the shore of the
blue Hellespontus.

Still the ghosts of the dead are fighting, will fight
there forever!

Catch the fleet flight of their words in thy strain,
in its adamant fix them,
Make adamantine the speech of the spectres by
rolling Scamander.

Also the Gods thou must see descending from
lofty Olympus,

Aiding one side or the other, inspiring this hero
or that one,

Nay, they must fight on Olympus, the Gods
must have too a battle,

But forget not omnipotence — high above all of
them Zeus sits.

'Tis our vision we grant thee, to spy out their
forms in the ether,

As they flit hither a thought of the mortal, but
yet a God too!

Loftily spoke the grand Muse, when she
changed to a look of compassion,

Which made me weep for myself as again she
began to forecast me :

‘ O, the hard law which for good the divine must
lay on the human !

For thy vision celestial the penalty too must be
given,

In return for the boon thou must yield thy ter-
restrial vision,

Sight at last in old age will be weighed and be
paid for thy insight.

Poverty thou must endure on the way for the
cause of thy poem,

Thine is to hunger in body and thine to suffer in
spirit,

Still kind hands will reach thee a morsel where-
ever thou singest,

Kindred souls will speak thee a word of sweet
 recognition,
Then go further and sing, though at first nobody
 may listen,
Further and further and sing till the end has been
 sung of thy journey.
Hard is thy lot, I warn thee — the lot of the
 God-gifted singer,
But it cannot be shunned — to shun it were
 death without dying.
Go now, get thee ready at once, and set out on
 thy travels.'

Roused by the voice of command I awoke in a
 swirl of the senses,
Homeward I hastened, reflecting how I might
 break to my mother
What I had heard in a swoond from the Muses
 so fateful, foretelling
Sad departure, ordaining divinely the long sep-
 aration.
Great was her joy at the marvelous tale, and
 great was her sorrow,
Tear was fighting with tear in a war of delight
 and of anguish,
Till in the masterful might of her heart she rose
 up and bade me:
'Go my son, start to-day, thou must follow the
 call of the Muses,

Suffer whatever of weal and of woe the Goddesses
give thee;
Thou wast the hope of my life, but gladly I shall
thee surrender,
Follow the call of the Muses, I can still spin for
a living.' ”

III.

Euterpe.

The Daughter of Homer.

ARGUMENT.

While Homer is telling to the youths the story of his early life, his daughter Praxilla, who has hitherto been kept in the background, appears and begs that she be allowed to share in the school and in the gifts of her father. She refuses all the allurements of love till this right be accorded her. Homer grants her petition, and finds in her words a strong note plainly indicating the future. Then they all move to the shrine of Apollo, and the poet prays the God for light within, and also prays for the God, who is still to unfold.

Strong and firm yet tender in tone had spoken
Homerus,
Ever the son of his mother and born each day of
her spirit,
Merely the thought of her brought back the sight
to his eyes, though he saw not,
And to his vision, though shut to the world, her
shape had arisen,
Speaking the long and the last farewell as he left
her to travel,
Speaking the words which Memory, shyest of
Muses, had whispered.

Of a sudden he stopped, borne off by the tide
of his feelings,
Out of the region of speech, which died like a
beautiful music

Far on the hills, with echoes repeating them-
selves on his heart-strings,
As he hearkened that voice which can only be
heard in its silence:
Always the poet responds to the lightest touch of
his poem,
In it the music he hears, and also the music be-
yond it,
For two strains his measures must have, both
singing together,
One of mortals and earth, the other of Gods and
Olympus,
One of gloom and of fate, the other of light and
of freedom.
Priest though he be at the altar of song, he is also
the victim,
And he yields up his heart to the battle of joy
and of sorrow.

Homer, sovereign singer, was weaving the
strands of his story,
Weaving together the threads of his life as he sat
in his garden,
Where, on the path of the sea to the East, the is-
land of Chios
Up from the waters throbs to the rise and the
fall of the billows,
Being itself but a petrified fragment of sea-
born music,

Which was sung into stone with its notes at their
sweetest vibration.

Over the slant and the summit the fruitage is hav-
ing a frolic,

Oranges coated with gold and olives sparkling in
silver,

Playing in floods of the sun that pour from the
sky to the island,

Whose new ardent blood is flowing to juice of the
wine-press.

Heart-beats of stormiest stone you can feel every-
where to the hill-tops,

Heaving the vehement earth till it rises from
slope into summit,

While the fiery soil is transmuted to grapes in
the vineyard,

Which reveal the red rage of the God in the
sparks of their droplets.

Pulses of passionate air you can breathe every-
where in the island,

Lifting the rapturous soul into love of the youth
and the maiden,

Which breaks forth into strains in answer to
valley and mountain.

Every look is a chorus of sea and of earth and
of heaven,

All of the isle is a song as it sways in the sweep
of its ridges,

And keeps time to the up and the down of the
beat of a master,

Tuning the sea and the land to vast undulations
of music,
Notes of the strain that rose from the voice of
the singer primeval
When he created the land and the sea and the
firmament starry.

In the heart of this musical isle, his birth-place,
sat Homer,
And around him stood youths from the east and
the west of all Hellas,
In a trance of the Muses carried along by his
numbers,
Yielding their souls unto his to be shaped to
that harmony splendid.
Nor from that group of fair youths could Eros
be rightfully absent,
Eros, the God of Love, had his shrine, as his
wont is, in secret
There in the garden of Homer who, though shut
in his eye-sight,
Could behold each deity present, however dis-
guised.

Suddenly all of the eyes of the youths were
turned from the singer,
And to the tune of new measures were shooting
poetic scintillas,
Rolling sidelong in fiery joy, yet trying to hide
it,

Flinging millions of sparkles over the form of a
maiden,
Very beautiful maiden, who entered the gate of
the garden.
Out of her hiding she moved, emerging from
leaves of her arbor,
Like a Goddess she came, who has sped from the
heights of Olympus
Down to the longing earth, to appear the divine
unto mortals.
Forward she stepped to the group without stop-
ping, and came to its center ;
All of the youths were lighting her path with
their looks as she passed them,
Making the twinkle of starlight there in the
blaze of the sunlight.
With a reverent glance she touched the lean hand
of the poet,
Yet the look of resolve gave strength to her
face in its sweetness,
Softly obedience shone just while her own way
she was going.
Standing behind him she pressed the bloom of
her cheek to his forehead,
Roses of life seemed to suddenly shoot from the
furrows of wisdom,
And to her father thus spake Praxilla the daugh-
ter of Homer,
While her strong sweet lips gave a kiss which
sounded heroic :

“ Father, suffer me also to come to thy knees
and to listen;
I would learn who thou art before thou pass from
this sunshine,
Soon thou must go, methinks, with the Days, the
daughters of Phœbus,
Go with the beautiful Days far over the sea to
the sundown.
I am the daughter of Homer, hardly I know yet
my father;
Do not deny me the hope of my soul which of
thine is begotten.
Great is my longing to hear of what thou art
saying and singing;
Why should men not share with the women their
lore and their wisdom?
None the less will you have, and we shall gain
much by your bounty;
We shall be worthy of you, and you will receive
the full blessing.
Long I have patiently kept in my bower, my
beautiful bower,
Covered with blossom and branch and filled with
the fragrance of Nature,
Which thou nobly gavest me once — it seems long
ago now —
Thoughtful the gift was and kind, but to-day I
can stay there no longer.
As I listened within it, hidden in leaves and in
branches,

Wreathed around and around in its flowers and
clasped in its tendrils,
I resolved to go forth and to claim my heritage
also,
Heritage equal of legend and song which are all
thy possessions.
Hear me, O Father! thy child, I am come to
know of thy knowledge,
I am come to thy school to learn if I be the true
heiress,
And to say the one word which long has been
growing within me,
Not yet mature, but this day it is ripe and must
drop from my lips now:
Child of thy body I am, I seek to be child of thy
spirit,
I, not knowing my father, am not the true
daughter of Homer."

Mild was the mien, yet strong was the word
which the maiden had uttered,
Gentle the note of her voice, suppressing softly
a quiver,
Yet betraying a wavering line in response to her
heart-beats,
Which sank down with her modesty, yet swelled
up with her purpose,
Heedful of men in her presence, but of their
scoffing defiant,

To her father dutiful, yet her own way she must
go too.

All of the youths admired and looked, she re-
turned not their glances,
Was there not one whom she in her heart already
had chosen —
One of those beautiful youths, the flower of
Hellas and Asia?
See how handsome they stand in a group, as if
they were God-born,
Gathered now on Olympus, rejoicing their par-
ents immortal!
Still not a look from the maiden that way! not
a glance of sly favor!
How can she help it? But not a beam hath she
dropped there among them.
Say, has Nature lost her authority over the
maiden?
Once revenges were wreaked on the rebel, double
revenges,
Love which rejects will feel too the pang of being
rejected,
Twofold the wound which Eros inflicts if you tear
out his arrow.
Mark how the generous summers of Chios have
given their bounty,
Given their hidden command in the warmth of a
Southern climate,
But the command is not heard, is defied by the
daughter of Homer.

Subtle and sinuous are the retreats in the heart
of a maiden
Where she hides herself, unconsciously testing
the gold there;
Labyrinth hopeless it is to dozens of fairest of
suitsors,
Yet its clew is simple — merely the love of the
right one,
When he happens along, as he certainly will, on
her pathway;
Yes, he will come, though we cannot tell when —
to-day or to-morrow;
Thinking or thoughtless, guilty or guileless, lo!
he is chosen,
And the rest, much better perchance, march off
under judgment;
Just he, nobody else, and the reason without
any reason,
Sent from above he must be, it is said, yet sent
by himself too,
Helped divinely she is, in going the way that she
pleases,
Providence brings them together, and both have
done what they wanted.
See the two Gods, within and without! they have
met and are kissing,
Eros and Psyche have met and are kissing, the
spirits immortal,
Long before the two mortals have tasted the lips
of each other.

But not so it runs now in the tale of the
daughter of Homer,
Now the law seems changed — and yet we can
hardly believe it;
Strange desire she has to share in the lore and
the legend,
Firmly refusing to listen to-day to the whisper
of Eros,
Who is wont to be hinting to maidens his secret
suggestion,
And to speak with his face hid in clouds till he
dare be discovered.
Now she will take her part of the gifts from her
father descended,
Dimly dreaming perchance that she hereafter
may need them;
She will learn the old songs which treasure the
wisdom of peoples,
Learn the story of heroes tried in the failure
and triumph,
Learn the story of women, unfallen, fallen, for-
given,
Faithful Penelope, dire Clytemnestra, beautiful
Helen;
She too will sing, remaining forever the daughter
of Homer.

Gently the poet groped for her hand, reaching
out with his fingers,

Found it and laid it in his with a satisfied look,
then addressed her :
“ Daughter methinks thy voice has suddenly
changed from thy childhood,
Yesterday thou wert a girl, to-day thou art wholly
the woman,
I can hear in thy tones once more the voice of
my mother,
Thine is the voice of Cretheis, when she was tell-
ing a story,
Sweet are the turns of thy tongue in talking our
living Hellenic,
And yet seeming to speak just to me from a world
resurrected,
Building anew out of speech the rainbows of
youthful remembrance.
But a difference, too, I can hear—thy words
are the stronger,
Yes, far stronger are thine than the words of
Cretheis my mother,
Who could fable the past and loved antiquity’s
custom ;
Stronger I deem them than Helen’s, which held
in their spell all Achæa.
They do not dwell in old days, nor do they de-
lay in the present,
They belong not here in our Chios, belong not
in Hellas,
But reach out to a time and a land somewhere in
the distance,

Dreamily rising this moment, I see, out the fog
 of the future,
Faintly lifted to life in the light of the beams of
 Apollo,
Who has whirled in his chariot over the arch of
 our heavens,
And, now facing the West, is scanning the far-
 thermost Ocean.
List ! I bid thee to come when done is the duty
 of household,
Come when thou wilt and stay when thou canst,
 both now and hereafter,
Freely unfold what is in thee to all that ever
 thou canst be.
Travel thou must thine own way of life as thy
 father before thee,
Be thou child of my spirit, be thou heiress of
 Homer,
Follow the path of the Sun round the world, and
 that be thy journey."

Scarce had he uttered the word, when stately
 he rose from the settle,
Full of the thought he had spoken he shone in
 each line of his visage ;
Then he moved to the place where stood in his
 garden an altar,
For, though blind, he knew well the way to the
 shrine of the Light-God.

After him moved the daughter and youths in
holy procession,
Solemn, slow-stepping, while stainlessly white
fell the folds of their garments;
When they had gathered about him and stood in
a worshipful silence,
Hopeful he turned to the sky, rolled upward his
sightless eyeballs,
Seeking the face of the God that shone as the
sun in the heavens,
And he prayed his soul's prayer, with might of
an instant fulfillment:
"O Apollo, bearer of all that is good to us
mortals,
Bearer of light to the Earth and of sight to the
soul in thy presence,
God of the luminous look that darts to the past
and the future,
And doth shine on the present forever, creating
it daily!
Shed still over the Earth thy light, though to me
thou deny it;
Build thy arch of pure beams each day round the
heavens above us,
Spend thy blessing on others, though I be not
able to take it;
Hold overhead as our lamp and our shield thy
canopy golden,
And, as thou risest upon the beautiful world out-
side me,

Rise and illumine the world, the dim world that
is lying within me!
Deity though thou be, for thee also I lift up my
prayer;
Thou unfold in thyself while I too in thee am
unfolding,
More and more may thy light be transformed
from the outer to inner,
Till thou be risen from godship of nature to god-
ship of spirit.
Then through thee may the song that I sing be
reborn in the ages,
Ever reborn unto men in the sheen of thy spirit,
O Light-God!"

All the youths prayed the prayer of Homer,
the daughter prayed with them,
In low tones of devotion that speak to the deity
present,
Standing full in the sheen of the sun by the shrine
of Apollo,
Who from his way in the West, threw back his
glances propitious,
Warming the words of the poet, and making the
moments all golden.

IV.

Erato.

The Stranger of Northland.

ARGUMENT.

At this point a stranger appears in the school of Homer, not a Greek or Asiatic, but a Barbarian, so called, from the far northwest. He has come to learn something about Homer, having had some previous information from a Greek captive whom he had taken in war. The stranger wishes to carry Homer's poetry — the whole of it, and not some fragments — to his people, and hand it down to the future. Meantime Praxilla, the daughter of Homer, listens to the story of the stranger with an interest never felt before, and she neglects for a moment her household duties in her eagerness to see and hear him. Homer and the scholars, after trying in vain to pronounce the rough gutturals of his name, salute him by the Greek title of Hesperion.

Scarce to the God of the Light had they ended
their powerful prayer,
And looked up from their service divine with a
sense of their freedom,
Lo, a stranger arrives, a youth still dusted with
travel,
Yet with a glow of new gladness that told of a
journey completed.
“Look, who is that?” the scholars were whis-
pering each to the other,
“Homerid novel he is, just come from Barbary
distant ;
Wonder if he have a tongue in his mouth that
can trill the Greek accent,
See but his mantle of motley and garments
swaddled around him,

Look at his face and his form, he never was
born in our Hellas.

Beautiful still he might be, if he only were
dressed in our drapery."

Then they ceased, for the stranger already was
standing among them,

Manly in look and lofty in stature and earnest in
feature.

Fair was his hair and ruddy his cheek and broad
were his shoulders,

Swift was the flash of his eye, it was wild and
still it was gentle,

Often it sank to a dream reflecting the blue of
the heavens.

Some new sort of a man he appeared to the
Greek of the islands,

Taller he stood by the half of his head than any
one present ;

At the entrance he stopped and gazed at the
group for a moment,

Smit by the sight of what he had suddenly seen
in an eye-shot ;

Then he turned and spoke to the poet, slowly
pronouncing

Each Greek word in a tone that tingled the ear
with new music,

Though it tickled at first the light-brained youths
to a titter,

Whispering, jibing, making remarks in the ban-
ter of boyhood.

Thus spake the stranger, deliberate, yet intoning his firmness,
For a message he had in his heart, and was going to tell it :
“ Far in the region of snow I dwell, whence Boreas chilling
Falls on the sun-loved South with his sword that is forged in the Northland,
Forged out of ice and tempered in blasts from the nostrils of frost-gods.
Fierce is that warrior of winds and like the barbarian ever,
Who is charmed from his frozen world to the warmth and the harvest,
And descends to your seas with his hordes in a whirl and a tempest,
Mad with your love he smites in his rage and seizes your beauty.
But, Oh Homer, you I address, the goal of my travels —
For I deem you that man whom I name by the awe of your forehead —
Do you know your measures have pierced our ice builded fortress,
Warming our clime by their breath and melting our hearts to their music?
Rude is the turn of your words in our speech, and dim is the meaning,
Still it touches our hearts, and to sympathy softens our fierceness;

You have made us all feel ourselves a little more
human,
When your Hero in wrath relented in pity for
Priam,
Ransomed his bitterest foe and comforted sweetly
the father.
Northland is starting to thaw in the breath of
the Southern singer,
And I am come to reward you alive by telling
the message."

Joyful the poet was tuned by the tidings hyper-
boréan,
Voice from a far off world and promise of much
that was coming,
Casting across the Greek landscape a shadow of
lands in the sunset.
New were the tones of the tongue, not Doric,
Aeolic, Ionic,
Not the turn of the speech that is spoken on
island or mainland,
Nothing like it had ever been heard in the city of
Chios,
Nothing like it had ever been sung in the strains
of a rhapsode,
Music it had of its own, and yet all the words
were Hellenic,
Nay, all the words were Homer's, and seemed to
be drawn from his poems,

Wondrously tinged with new tints and quaintly
turned to new meanings.

Greatly surprised at the sound of the voice spake
Homer, uprising :

“Speak, oh guest, tell how you have learned
our language of Hellas ;

Hard it is for the native, harder it must be for
strangers,

Cunning it is like ourselves, eluding the grasp of
the learner,

In its hundreds of shifts transforming itself like
old Proteus.

Then I notice your rhythm to be of my measures
begotten,

And some turns of your speech are certainly born
of my spirit,

Aye and the sweep of the thought when you
spoke of the Hero Achilles.

Well you have heard my song, far better than
many a Grecian,

Though a barbarian, you, I can feel, have the
touch of my kinship.

Mighty and marvelous is all this, I would never
have thought it,

Come now, tell me the story, Oh guest, for great
is my wonder.”

“That I shall tell you at once,” he replied,
“not long is the story.

What I have spoken to you, I learned from a
Greek, my own captive,
Whom I had taken in war, when he came to my
country's border,
Trading, plundering, wandering over the world
for adventure;
That was another Ulysses, much-enduring and
crafty,
Loving the song and the fable, singing them too
on occasion,
Loving the deed and daringly doing on land and
on water.
Your Greek earth was too small for the stress of
his thought and his action,
Over the border he broke and hunted his prey
like a lion,
Knowledge beyond it he sought, and fell into fate
in his searching.
How I felt in my bosom the swell and the stroke
of his spirit!
When I found what he was, I made him my friend
and companion,
Though a slave still in name, he was given my
love and my bounty;
Well he repaid the act; from a prisoner's death
I had saved him,
And he saved me in turn from the ignorant death
of the savage.
There in the forest your speech I began, I prac-
ticed it daily

Till by his aid I was able to speak it the way you
now hear me.

Him I set free as soon as he taught me the lan-
guage of Homer,

It is the word of your poem that broke the chain
of his bondage,

Mine too it broke at a blow when I said in your
Greek: 'Be free now,'

And I am sure, it would break every chain of the
people who spoke it."

More astonished than ever the poet burst out
into questions:

"Why hast thou come to this spot, and how
didst thou get to our island?

Utter again to me here thy broken Hellenic —
I love it,

Love it twisted and splintered and broken to ra-
diant fragments

Dropping out of thy mouth, yet speaking the
best that is spoken.

Say, who art thou, man, and what art thou doing
in Hellas?"

Jubilant Homer asked, but could not wait for
the answer,

Asked once more, and that was not yet the end
of his asking,

Till the stranger, breaking the lull of a moment,
responded:

“ He the Greek whom I spoke of, once called
you a native of Chios;
With that name in my heart, inquiring each step
I am come now
Over the land from afar and over the sea in a
vessel.

But is it so? I can hardly believe it myself —
Art thou Homer?
Tell me, old man, thy name, O speak it but
once — Is it Homer? ”

“ So I was called by my mother, still so I am
called by the Hellenes,
Though there be some who deem me not Homer
but some other person,
Merely a different man of that name,” responded
Homerus,
And a sunrise of smiles broke over the seams of
his features,
As arose in his thought the pedagogue dwelling
in Chios,
Terrible pedagogue, trouncer of boys, the crusty
Typtódes.

Then spake the stranger, uplifting himself to
the height of his stature,
Far overlooking the heads of the rest of the little
assembly:
“ Let me now tell you the scope of my travel,
the hope of my journey !

Praised be the Gods! I have reached in safety
the place of your dwelling,
Mighty, resistless the need I have felt to see you
and hear you,
Aye, to learn your full song and store it away in
my bosom,
Whence the Muses, daughters of Memory, al-
ways can fetch it.
I would carry it off to my home far up in the
Northland,
Fleeting over the wintry border of beautiful
Hellas
Where it reaches beyond the abode of the Gods
on Olympus,
To the regions where drinking their whey dwell
the mare-milking Thracians,
Over the hills and the valleys away to the banks
of a river,
To the stream that is bearing the flood of the
wide-whirling Istros,
Still beyond and beyond, still over the plain and
the mountain,
Over vast lands to the seas, and over the seas to
the lands still,
Through the icied forest, and through the
tracts of the frost-fields,
Still beyond and beyond, still over the earth and
its circles,
I would carry your song in my soul to the homes
of my people

Where the huge arms of the breakers are smit-
ing the shore of the Ocean,
Ever beyond and beyond in the stretch of their
strokes they are striking,
Beating, forever repeating the strokes of the in-
finite Ocean."

Both of his arms he outstretched and gazed on
the sea for a moment;
Catching his breath, the stranger returned from
his look to his hearers:
"Barbarous lands and peoples you call them, and
truly so call them,
But in their hearts they are ready, I know, to be
tuned to your music,
And to be dipped, once more new-born, in your
harmony holy,
Which they will keep forever enshrined in their
lore and their legend.
Homer, O Homer, poet of all the nations and
ages,
Give unto Barbary now what the Gods have
given to Hellas."

Round whirled the stranger, the beat of his
thought still smiting within him,
Driven out of himself, he walked at a whisk a
small circle
And came back to his stand, as if putting a bodily
period

There to the sweep of his utterance swift, but
his spirit's full gallop
He could not rein in at once, and so his words he
continued :

“ All of your song I would know, the whole
of it fitted together,
That Greek captive of mine could only sing me
the fragments,
Broken off here and there from the whole —
most beautiful fragments,
Which Mnemosyne fleetingly brought him when
he invoked her.
But the whole of your song I must have, the
whole of it shredless,
For the whole is often far more than all of its
pieces,
Aye, the whole is all of its pieces, and is the
whole too.”

Here laughed Homer aloud, yet spake no word
with his pleasure ;
What had started the poet who rarely gave way
to his laughter?
It was the thought, the comical thought of the
pedagogue Chian,
Who was always beating and breaking the song
into pieces,
Till he became what he made, became too himself
but a fragment —

Terrible fragment of man, the trouncer of boys
and of verses,
Terrible pedagogue Chian, the slasher and
thrasher, Typtodes.

All of the youths drew closer around him, the
wonderful stranger,
Scholar hyperboréan, the first that had come from
the Northland ;
They received him as one of themselves in the
school of the master,
Gone is the scoff and the jibe, and the whisper is
speaking respectful.

Also Praxilla was there, the beautiful daughter
of Homer,
Hearing the marvelous tale and pondering deeply
its meaning.
Sweetly the maiden looked up and smiled at the
mirth of her father,
Though she knew not the cause, she knew that
the stranger had pleased him,
Her too the stranger had pleased, she thought,
in pleasing the father,
Her too the stranger had pleased — she knew not
what was the reason.
Not yet brought to an end was the task of the
day in the household,
Still she lingered and listened, though hearing the
call of the kitchen.

Nobly erect stands the youth, and towers aloft
in his stature,
Brave as a hero he must be to travel alone the
long journey,
Loyal the heart in his breast, so true to his Greek
benefactor ;
Lofty his soul looks out and full of divine aspi-
ration !
Man with a beard, overtopping the cluster of
beardless bardlings,
As great Zeus overtops all the Gods in his mien
and his power.
Burst is the bloom of his manhood, still as a man
he is youthful,
Weighty his speech drops down with the ring of
the masterful doer ;
And Praxilla the daughter of Homer still lingered
- and listened,
Lingered to hear but a word, one more word
she would catch from the stranger,
Though again she heard the importunate cry of
the kitchen.

Seeing her there he began once more, that son
of the Northland,
For he thought she might wish to be told what he
knew about women :
“ Rude though we be and warriors from birth, we
are fond of the household,

And we honor the wife who rules with her heart
in her home life;
But, yet more, we honor the woman, for she is
the healer,
Ever the merciful healer through the love in her
nature,
Healing the soul and the body, and nursing the
sick and the helpless.
Aye, yet more, we hold her the seeress, the
gifted divinely,
Who has the vision beyond, foretelling the time
unto mortals."

And Praxilla still lingered and listened, the
daughter of Homer,
Lingered to hear but a word, one more word she
would hear from the stranger;
Louder and louder resounded the dolorous cry
of the kitchen.

Then the poet in speech forethoughtful and
hearty addressed him:
"Welcome, oh stranger, here is our board with
its wine and its viands,
Stay and partake, be refreshed from thy journey
in body and spirit,
First pour a drop to the God of the Light, far
darter Apollo,
Pray then, for men have need of the God, he will
answer thy prayer.

Take of me all that I am, or was or ever I shall
be,
Bear me afar as thou wilt, to thy folk in the
snows of the Northland,
Learn all my song and carry it off, the whole,
not a fragment,
For no fragment can live if torn from its life in
the body;
Sing it thyself and let it be sung by the farther-
most peoples,
Thine it is as it is mine, if thou only art able to
sing it;
In thy words I can feel that thou art the son of
the future,
Feel what is coming to me and to mine from the
world to the westward.
Welcome O guest, now drink of our wine and
eat of our viands;
Stay — perchance I shall make thee joint heir of
all my possessions.”

So spake the father in joy, expecting the feast
to be ready.
But Praxilla, where is Praxilla, the dutiful
maiden?
Still she lingered in spite of herself, and listened,
and wondered,
Lingered to catch but a word, one more word,
from the lips of the stranger,

Though her father she heard re-echo the cry of
kitchen,
When he spoke of drinking the wine and eating
the viands.
Beautiful daughter of Homer she stood there,
but dutiful also;
She was restless, and said to herself in reproof,
still delaying:
“ Surely I ought to be off, I was needed long
since in my kitchen;
What will the household become if left to itself
in the future?
Oh, those women, those wonderful women, up
there in the Northland!
That was the tale of a dream, and still I appear
to be dreaming,
Thinking myself far away in the glistening home
of the frost-gods,
Thinking myself in a temple of ice on the top of
an iceberg.
Woman, now speed from this old Greek world
and march to the new one!
Would he take me along if I perchance would go
with him?
That is my mind — and yet I know not whether I
know it;
That is my mind — beyond the seas and over the
mountains —
But I must go — my kitchen, my kitchen — and
still I delay here —

Ever beyond and beyond is my mind, on the wings
of my thinking,
Over the plain and the mountain, and over the
border of Hellas,
Up to the stream that is bearing the flood of the
wide-whirling Istros,
Over the river afar to the shore of the further-
most Ocean,
Where I can feel the embrace of the waves of the
earth-holding Ocean,
There I would stand by the waters — and yet
even they could not stop me !
But away to my kitchen, my kitchen — Oh, why
do I stay here ! ”

Just at that moment the stranger looked over
the youths round about him,
But those youths did not mark quite what he was
warily seeking,
Even away from the poet he looked and found
what he searched for,
Where stood the lingering, listening daughter of
Homer, Praxilla,
Who still delayed for a word, one more word
from the lips of the stranger.

Then spake the father, breaking into the
thought of the daughter :
“ Hold ! thy name, O guest, we must know, ere
we go to the banquet,

We must address thee as one of our own, when
we sit at the table."

Slowly the stranger pronounced it, barbarous,
heavy, rough-throated,

But those soft-toned Greeks could not speak it in
spite of their cunning,

Oft he repeated it for them, but in vain they
essay'd it,

Rudely its sounds were jolting out their mouths
in confusion,

Broken to fragments around on the air flew the
name of the stranger.

Then the master spake out, and bade all be silent
a moment :

" Much too old is my voice to be forced to the
tones of thy language,

Always it creaks and breaks if strained to the
subtle adjustment,

I have sung too much to make any longer this
discord.

Hearken to me ! in my tongue I shall name thee
henceforward Hesperion,

Son of the Evening, come from the dip of bright
Helius westward,

Rising and shining when it is sunset already in
Hellas.

That is a name we can sing to right music in
measure Hellenic,

List to the word, let us sing it together : Wel-
come, Hesperion ! ”

Then the youths sang aloud all together : Wel-
come, Hesperion !

And Praxilla whispered in silence : Thrice
welcome Hesperion !

In a blush at her whisper, she turned and ran out
to her kitchen.

Elio.

The Travels of Homer.

ARGUMENT.

Homer takes up the account of his travels through Hellas in preparation for his work. All his scholars are present, of whom a short list is given. He first went to Troy, and saw the ruined city with its plain, where the war took place. Then he crossed over to the continent of Greece, and heard the people of each village celebrate the deeds of its special hero. While singing himself he also heard the bards of every locality sing its special legend of Troy and the aforesaid. Thus Homer gathered all the stories of the Trojan war, and fused them together into his great national poem. He chanced to speak of Helen and her captivity; at once the old conflict flames out among the pupils in his school. But Homer stops the dispute for a short time, and continues the narrative of his travels, till the strife breaks out anew, this time over Hector, between Glaucus the Lycian and Demodocus the Ithacan. Each side is still ready to fight the Trojan war over again. Homer once more harmonizes the conflict, and takes occasion to show how the poet must embrace in himself both sides of the struggle which he portrays.

Morning had come from the East saluting the
island of Chios,
Throwing her kisses of light along every line of
the landscape,
Till it stood forth in her glance, revealed and
transfigured to vision.
Soft was the light that she dropped from her lips
on the hill and the valley,
Tenderly touching the air with violet tinges and
golden ;
Under her feet lay the waters and over her head
bent the heavens,
Both of them waked from the night, reflecting
her soul in their stillness ;
Sea and sky, the two big blue eyes of nature, had
opened,

And were looking with joy on Chios, the beautiful island,
Where not far from the beach stood the garden
and dwelling of Homer.

All the youths had assembled to hear the tale
of his travel,
Which by the chance of the moment had been
before interrupted;
Now they would hear of the way he had wandered
to come to his poems,
For they all would like to be Homers and sing
of the heroes,
Catching the glory of life in the lilt of a musical
measure.

Glaucus was there, a youth from the banks of
the eddying Xanthus,
Mighty his ancestor was, Bellerophon, hero of
Lycia;
Warriors his race had been, but he now sought to
be poet;
Singing not doing the deed he held the better vocation.
Other great names were present from lowland
and upland of Asia:
Gyges, Mysius, Nastes, son of a Phrygian monarch,
Dardan from Gargarus nigh unto Troy, the city
in ruins,

Aphroditorus the curled Milesian boy, Niobides
Fresh from the tears of Sipylus — these may
stand as examples ;

But the foremost was Glaucus, the son and the
grandson of Glaucus,
Far back tracing his blood to the veins of Bel-
lerophonates.

Next, O Muse, thou must glance at the youths
who crossed out of Europe.

Young Demodocus came, who sprang from an
order of singers,

Living in Ithaca where they sang of the toils of
Ulysses.

Homer had been their guest when he touched
their isle in his travels,

Gathering wonderful Ithacan tales of voyages
westward,

Fabulous threads of song, like gossamers floating
in sunshine,

All to be caught by the poet and wove to a beau-
tiful garment.

Teucer of Salamis came, descended from Teucer
the archer ;

Skill in handling the bow he possessed — the
gift of Apollo,

But the God had refused his other great gift —
that of wisdom ;

Still the youth would be singer, and broke in
scorn all his arrows,

Talent he had for the one, desire he felt for the
other,
Teucer could not what he would, and whatever
he could he would not.
Burly Plexippus was there, the richest scholar
of Homer,
Glossy and sleek were grazing his herds in
Thessaly grassy,
Thousands of horses were his that drank at the
streams of Peneios,
Palaces too he owned and held whole cities for
barter;
Somehow he thought he could simply exchange
some cattle for verses,
E'en the Pierian spring was his by virtue of
money,
Once for its waters he counted out pieces of gold
and of silver,
But though their fountain he bought, he never
could purchase the Muses.
When he returned to his country and held his
Thessalian domains,
All his thought was to buy up the home of the
Gods, high Olympus,
Then the Gods he deemed he possessed, possessing
their mountain,
And at his will he could call them down from their
heights to his poem.

Other youths from the islands had come, and
also from Argos,

But the Muse has not given their names excepting
Sophrones,
Clear Athenian soul, devoted to worship of
Pallas,
Moralist ever was he, the manifold maker of
maxims.

Tall Hesperion too was present, just from the
Northland,
Sole barbarian there, yet eager to learn and to
listen,
Towering over the rest like Fate over beautiful
Hellas;
Strong were his features, yet melting to love in
the sunshine of Chios.

One more scholar forget not, though first present
this morning!
There she stands behind by the door — the daughter
of Homer,
Still by the door in the rear — she yet will advance
to the foreground.
Shy are her glances, striving to hide her heart in
her bosom,
But they are tell-tales, and whisper the thought
she is secretly thinking.

Voices arose which bade the poet go on with
his story;
Grappling awhile for his thought again he began
his recital :

“ First I went over to Troy, and dwelt on its
plain and its hillock,

In the city destroyed I stayed and lived with its
ruins,

Which still talk to the traveler telling their story
so fateful.

Rivers I saw in the plain, and heard the God of
Scamander

Speak of the Heroes slain and many a furious
battle,

As he pointed to corselet and helmet and shield
mid his rushes,

Showing the skulls of the dead that grinned from
the ooze of his stream bed.

Thence I passed on the sea in a ship from island
to island,

Felt the favor of hoary Poseidon, and felt too his
anger,

When he would roll up the waves in a storm by
the might of his trident;

Him I once saw in his chariot scudding away on
the billow

Right into sunset, and leaving a fiery track
through the waters.

Glad for my life I was when I came to the main-
land of Hellas,

Peoples I saw, their cities and customs, but
chiefly their legends

Drew me to listen and gather each radiant shred
of their spirit.

Heroes unknown I found everywhere, great men
of their village,
Whose high deeds were at festivals sung by their
townsmen in worship,
For each village its Hero must have and revere
him divinely.
Every bard in the country I heard and stored up
his fables,
Till the Delphian cleft which utters the measures
prophetic,
Till the Thesprotian land where speak the oaks of
Dodona,
Till the Olympian heights where Gods look
down upon Hellas.
And to Helicon came I and heard the song of its
Muses,
Singing a rival strain to the Sisters who sit on
Parnassus;
There I listened to Hesiod, crabbed old singer of
Ascra,
And I gave him a note of the song that was rising
within me,
I had already begun the new lay of the Gods and
the Heroes.
For a moment he ceased his complaints of man
and of woman,
Quit his dark world of monsters primeval and
hazy huge Titans,
Just long enough for a laugh to break out like a
flash from a storm-cloud,

And to say to me: Friend, I shall visit thee
sometime in Chios."

Here the poet himself was a smile and dropped
into silence

For a minute or more, and then he returned to
his story:

"Early to Argos I came and heard in a hymn the
whole people

Chanting the glory of Diomed, who was their
valorous leader,

How in the war of Troy he fought with the
Gods, though a mortal,

Fought with two Trojan Gods in the might of
his heart, and he conquered;

For the Greek though a man, must put down the
God if a Trojan.

'That' I said to myself 'is a note in the lay of
our Hellas,

In the grand lay of our Hellas that is a strain of
the music;

Part of the one vast temple of song in the soul
of the nation,

I shall take it and mould it and build it into my
'poem.'

Each little fragment of life and each stray film
of a story,

Name of mountain, river and town, whatever I
found there,

All I picked up on the spot, and began to weave
• them together,

By the aid of Mnemosyne, Muse who always re-
members.

Then to Mycenæ I went, the golden, where
dwelt Agamemnon,

Through the portal I passed that was guarded
above by the Lions,

Fiercely glaring in stone at the man who entered
their gateway.

Much the splendid city had waned from its old
Trojan glory,

And the look of the sunset rested all day on its
towers.

There I learned the King's fate at the hands of
his wife Clytemnestra,

And the death of herself and her lover, both
slain by Orestes.

Sad was the tale of the doomful House of the
Monarch wide-ruling,

I could never refrain from repeating that tale in
my measures,

Truest example, methinks, of the dealing of
Gods with us mortals,

Still to be sung in many new poems to millions
hereafter.

It will be poured into bronze, and hewn out of
whitest of marble,

Told in tongues yet unborn, to measures unheard
of in Hellas.

Wretched indeed is the man, if the Gods in his
pride, he obey not ;
Base Ægisthus, I feel in my heart the point of
thy dagger !”

Fervidly spake the old man, and he seemed
overcome by his story,
Thinking the fate that befel the great prince
of the Greeks, Agamemnon.
To his own life the poet transmuted the lives
of the Heroes,
Every thread of a fable he span to a strand of
his heart-strings,
Each wild word of the wildest old legend he
caught and transfigured,
Unto each sorrow of mortal his bosom beat
mighty responses ;
Nobly the youths were led to revere the man in
the poet.

Soon his gloom he had caught and flung it far
back into Lethe,
Whence at times it escapes in the brightest of
souls up to daylight,
And he began, in his countenance looking the
look of the sunrise :
“ Over the heights I scrambled, that was a coun-
try of mountains !
Woodmen I met in the forest, here and there a
small hamlet,

But every where I could find some fragment of
song or of story.

Through the glens I passed of the piping Arcadian
shepherds,

Through the hills full of music down into the
vale of Eurotas,

Where lay Sparta — and there was the home of
the beautiful Helen.

Still the palace I saw in the sunlight, where Paris
the Trojan

As a guest was grandly received by the King
Menelaus,

And I saw too the glance of the eye and the
thought of the woman,

In its first flash to the fateful resolve — of wars
the beginning !

Madly I followed each step on the path of the
sea as she fled thence,

Feeling the glow and the guilt of a passionate
world in each heart-beat,

Watched her enter the ship, the sheltering ship of
her lover,

Watched it ride on the sea till it vanished afar on
the waters.

There I sank on the sand, as the dead man drops
from the arrow

Sent to his heart, and I died for a while in the
battle of Helen.

O Aphrodite, Goddess of joy that is paid with
all sorrow,

Queen of the love that bears in its proof the bitterest vengeance,
There I fell down the thrall of thy spell, but I
 rose up the master.
Thou dost also possess in thy right the soul of
 the singer,
I was Paris myself and I fled to the East with my
 Helen,
Troy I was too and its siege, I was taken and
 burnt into ashes;
But I am also the law which is read in the flames
 of the city,
And I am the stern judgment of Gods who speak
 from its ruins.”

When the poet had stopped in the rush of his
 words for a moment,
See! a youth stands forth with a flash in his eye
 like a falchion,
Lycian Glaucus it is, from the banks of the eddy-
 ing Xanthus,
Grandson of Glaucus who fell in the war by the
 walls of the Trojans,
Sprung of the seed of Heroes, though poesy
 now he has chosen;
Standing forth from the ranks of his friends, thus
 says he to Homer:
“Helen belonged to our side, for she was the
 woman of beauty,

We had to take her and keep her, or lose the
heritage lovely,
Basely resign it to others, and yield up the claim
of fair Asia.
Twenty years she was ours, of all the great war
she was worthy,
Twenty years she was ours, and we paid but the
price of a city,
Even one moment of Helen is worth all the losses
of Priam."

Scarce had he done when a valorous youth
sprang out of the front-line
From the opposite ranks, as if to respond to the
challenge ;
It was Demodocus, son of Demodocus, Ithaca's
singer,
Now in the school of the poet to learn the new
song of the ages ;
Far in advance was the song of all that were sung
in his country
By the old bards, his fathers. Pointing his finger
at Glaucus,
Raising his arm and smiting the air at each word,
he spoke thus :
" Yes, we smote you, we burnt you, we bound you
when sated with slaughter,
Women we seized and your wealth, we wasted
the city and country.

Little was left in the land, in your gore we
 painted our glory,
And the same fate awaits you again if you come
 to the trial.
Helen, the prize of the world, you had to sur-
 render forever."

Each of the fiery speakers had spoken his speech
 in a fury;
See the turn! how strange! they are looking no
 more at each other.
Both of them bending the head, they covertly
 glance at one object,
Right at one point where stands the beautiful
 daughter of Homer,
As if Helen she were, to be fought for and won
 by a nation.
But in the background quite overtopping them
 all stood the stranger,
Just behind the fair daughter he stood and
 seemed to be weighing,
Dreamful, blue-eyed Hesperion, yesterday come
 from the Northland,
Now he seemed to be weighing two weights in
 the scales of a balance.

In the midst of the din the poet uprose from
 his settle,
As great Zeus on Olympus, the God of the Greeks
 and the Trojans,

Who looks down to the earth and judges the
struggle of mortals.

Homer suddenly saw the old conflict arise in his
scholars,

Every battle at Troy was still in them — how
could they help it?

From the East and the West they had come, from
Hellas and Asia,

Deep is that scission of soul and of time — a
breach everlasting,

Not to be healed but by one who is both the
victor and vanquished,

Who can feel the defeat triumphant, the triumph
defeated,

Who can be slayer and slain, and rise up new-
born from his ashes.

Homer united both sides, and both saluted him
poet,

What in them was a discord, he turned into har-
mony lasting,

What was twain in their lives, in his he made one
and a poem.

All had their own completeness in him, so hailed
him as master.

When to speak he began, one word changed
strife into concord:

“Hold, O youths,” he cried, “cease wrangling
at once in my presence;

Learn from to-day just what is the bondage you
are to get rid of ;
Free is the poet, but free you are not when ruled
by a passion ;
Whole he must be, but whole you are not when
halved into parties ;
Music you never will make if the soul hath a
break in its tension.
Hear entirely ; now let us go on with the rest of
my story.
Over to Pylos I passed, and saw the land of sage
Nestor,
Who returned to his home from the war un-
troubled by tempest,
Or by the wrath of the Gods, which wrecked so
many returning.
Older than I am he was when at Troy, and yet a
good soldier,
Fond of the fight, but of telling a tale of his youth
still fonder.
Thence I sailed to Ithaca where I heard of
Ulysses,
Wisest of men, he endured ; and enduring, he
rose in his wisdom ;
Great were his deeds at Troy, for he was the
Hero who took it,
Mounting its walls by the wooden horse that was
winged with his cunning ;
Over Achilles he rises, through might of the
spirit's contrivance.

But yet greater his task was after the city had
fallen;
To return was the Hero's work, to return to his
country
And to his wife, through storms of the sea and
himself in his doubting.
Wandering through the whole world that lies out
the sunlight of Hellas,
Into the magical islands beyond the bounds of
our knowledge,
Suffering sailed he on, though losing all his
companions;
Ithacan bards there told me his tale of the Cyclops,
of Circe,
Even through Hades he passed, through the realm
of spirits departed;
Living, the Hero must go beyond life, and return
to the living.
Thither I followed him too, in my age I told his
adventures,
Bringing him back to Penelope prudent and
Ithaca sunny;
Last of my song is this, it has just lately been
finished,
Though some parts have been sung long since at
the festivals Chian,
Showing a glimpse of the West where men find
always their new-world."

Thus he spake, and he turned, though blind,
with his face to the sundown,
Where in his path Hesperion, thoughtful, was
standing in silence ;
But before he began, interposed Sophrones of
Athens :
“ Why such a liar and rogue did you make him,
your hero Ulysses ? ”
“ Penalty too he must pay, the penalty even of
wisdom, ”
Answered Homerus, thoughtful, forecasting his
words for his scholars.
Low and slow he now spoke, as if with his soul
he were talking :

“ Always the deed must be paid for, the doer
heroic must suffer,
Virtue arouses revenges and duty may call up the
Furies ;
Double the conflict must be, and the right may
also be double.
O Ulysses, great was thy action, but followed by
curses !
The reward of thy life will be centuries full of
reproaches !
Wrongful men thou didst pay with their wrong,
for this expect judgment ;
Thou didst meet the guileful with guile, smite
foes with their weapons,

Thou shalt be rated as guileful and cruel in turn
for thine action.

Compensation, the law, has been laid by the
Gods upon me too,

All the sunshine of nature is dark in spite of my
vision,

Insight the Muses have given, but for it my sight
has been taken."

Such was the answer, but it met not the need
of Sophrones,

Who was the moralist trying old tales with the
touchstone of virtue,

Easily solving the problem heroic by rule or a
maxim,

Excellent maxim for men who have not the stress
of the problem.

Thus the worthy Sophrones tested the life of the
Hero,

Putting his standard to each and measuring
strictly the defect.

Hear him again, for always Sophrones has one
other question :

"Which was right, the Greek or the Trojan?
That is the point now,

Truly the point to be settled before I can enter
this calling.

Much I have been worried about it, and still no
decision.

Ere I can sing, I must know just what is and
who are the righteous.

Dare I confess? I like not Achilles, Ulysses,
not Helen,

Beautiful Helen — she is not beautiful seen by
my vision,

Nor can I love Penelope prudent with all of her
cunning;

Aye, the Gods of Olympus I like not, I cannot
adore them;

Zeus do you think I can worship, a God with the
passions that I have?"

Homer, the poet, was silent; Sophrones, how-
ever, grew louder:

"Best of them all is Hector the Trojan, the man
most perfect,

True to the wife of his heart and doing his duty
to country,

Brave as a lion in war and gentle at home as a
woman.

But, like the good man always, he had to fall in
the struggle,

And by fate to lose what he fought for — his
cause and his city.

Such is the world — the great men are bad and
the good men must perish."

On the spot the sparkles were flying from one
of the scholars,

It was Glaucus who spoke, the fiery Lycian bard-
ling :

“ He was right — great Hector — defending
his home and his nation

From the wanton attack of the bandits who sought
to destroy them ;

Valiant in every way he was for his land and his
people,

He is the Hero of Homer, I say, the only true
Hero ;

Hector was right, will be right forever, and he was
a Trojan.”

Then he turned to one of the company seeking
approval,

Just from one and no more he sought it — the
daughter of Homer,

Not from the father the poet, but from the beau-
tiful daughter

Sought he the meed of a glance for his verses,
but she beheld not,

For she was looking away from the youths in an-
other direction.

But in answer Demodocus spoke, his vigorous
rival;

Rival not only in verse, but also in love of the
maiden :

“ Yes, but he fought for the thing that was
wrong and he knew it — your Hector !

For the rape of Helen he fought and made it his
own thus ;
Aye, the good husband battled in Troy to keep
wife from husband.
What in his soul he condemned, he supported by
arms and by words too,
And so died of a lie in his life and the spear of
Achilles.”

Suiting the act to the speech, Demodocus drew
back and lifted
Hand and arm to a poise, as if he were hurling the
weapon
Straight at Hector, to slay him before the battle-
ments Trojan;
Lycian Glaucus shrank not, but leaped to the
front at the challenge.
Great was the uproar; the war of Troy once
more was beginning
Right in the school of Homer, but quickly the
master bade silence:
“Hearken, O youths, what I say, and learn
by example a lesson!
Not a part is the poet, nor is he owned by a
party.
On which side do I sing in my poem — the Greek
or the Trojan?
Mark it — on both and on neither; the will of
Zeus is accomplished,

God supreme of the Hellenes, rising above all
conflict.

Not with another, but with himself is the poet's
true struggle,

He is the slayer and slain and his soul is the
place of the battle.

Much I think with the Greeks and much I feel
with the Trojans,

These have my heart perchance, but those take
hold of my reason;

Zeus too loves his dear children in Troy, but de-
cides for Achæa.

Ah, the poet must fight in himself the dolorous
combat,

As the God fought the God in the fray on the
heights of Olympus;

Wounds he cannot escape, he must bleed in the
battle on both sides;

Showing the strife of the time, he shows too the
strife in his bosom,

But he must heal it — just that is the seal of the
God on the singer;

Rage, war, battles he sings, but also the peace
and atonement,

Sings great Achilles in wrath, and reconciled
sings great Achilles.

Now let the truce be confirmed between both
the Greeks and the Trojans,

And in our joy we shall pour to the Gods a hearty
libation."

Tall Hesperion silently heard the dispute of the
bardlings,
Much he had learned about Hellas, and seen the
two sides of the conflict,
Seen it still living and parting atwain the new
generation,
Who were ready to fight over Troy, and over its
poem.
But the best was, he saw the poet bring both
sides to oneness,
Out of discordance bring harmony lofty of men
and of Gods too,
Making the tumult of war sing the song of
Olympian order.

Homer in happiest mood uprose and continued
his talking :
“ Youths, Demodocus, Glaucus, now heal ye the
wounds of each other,
Thinking the thought of high Zeus, as it sings to
a melody god-born,
Speaking divinity's word which is sprung of the
soul's recognition.
Valiant ye be, but let us proclaim, the war is
now over,
All in one joy to-day let the East and the West
greet as brothers,
Each of them taking the best of the other as
test of his spirit !”

Turning aside, he spoke out the word of command in a transport :

“Speed thee, Amyntas, my boy, a full jar of old Chian, the oldest,

Ten years’ ripe let it be, for age in the wine bringeth wisdom

Back to the drinker, in concord attuning anew the lost temper,

Bringing the oneness of truth into souls that differ by nature.

Here comes the wine, already I catch a whiff of its fragrance,

Oldest of Chian it is, a God would mistake it for nectar.

Glaucus, Demodocus, Gyges, Plexippus, and Aphroditorus,

Noble Hesperion also, thou valorous youth of the Northland,

Pledge now a health to yourselves, and pour to the Gods a libation.”

All the youths of the school, most willing, obeyed the good master,

Touched loving lips to the brim of the wine on the rim of the beaker,

Pledging a health to themselves and pouring to Gods a libation.

Hark ! mid the draught a shrill noise is disturbing the flow of the liquid,

'Tis the rickety gate as grinding it grates on its hinges.

Opening first to a push, then backward it slams with a racket;

What is the shape that noisily enters and shuffles along there?

Man well-known in Chios he is, well-known unto Homer,

Satisfied man with himself he seems by the turn of his features.

That is the pedagogue, first of the island, the lord of the laurel,

Which he doth use as a switch for teaching the verses of poets,

Teaching the boys of his school the glory and gift of the Muses,

Whose fair branch he now twirls in his hand as he turns up the pathway.

Terrible pedagogue Chian he comes, the thrasher and slasher,

Thrashing the youths into lore and slashing the poets to pieces,

Into the school of Homer he walks — he is here —
O Typtodes!

VI.

Terpsichoré.

The Pedagogue Chian.

ARGUMENT.

A rival school to that of Homer is taught by Typtodes, the Chian schoolmaster, who comes one day to have a short visit with the poet. Typtodes is the severe critic of Homer's poems, and cuts them to pieces quite as some modern professors have done. But the schoolmaster is a progressive man and is now specially interested in the new script which has been brought from Phœnicia. In fact he is giving to the poems of Homer their first alphabetic dress in spite of his criticism. It turns out that Typtodes has really come to see the daughter of the poet, though he disguises the fact. But his bitter criticism is modified by the wine which Homer causes to be brought him, and his final questions are in a different vein from his first utterances. A new man appears who will give some answer to what Typtodes has asked.

Not alone and unchallenged the poet held sway
in his city,
There was a rival in Chios, who in his realm was
the ruler.
Most of the youths of the place were sent to the
school of Typtodes,
Crusty Typtodes, a far-famed trouncer of boys
into learning,
Tickling bare legs of Greek boys till they danced
to the sprig of his laurel,
Which he always held in his hand while he made
them con verses,
Rousing the Muses unwilling by use of their
favorite symbol.

Some were verses struck at a heat from the heart
of a poet,
With an Olympian might, and flowing and glowing
forever
In the fire and flash of the words of the primal
conception.
But the others, the most, were his own, the pedagogue's
verses,
Made without a mistake according to rule in his
school-room,
Flawlessly made out of wood, the toughest wood
in the forest.

In his sandals he shuffles along the loose stones
of the pathway;
Slyly he shuffles and seems to be slipping about
on his tiptoes,
As the schoolmaster warily slippeth around in
the school-room,
Seeking to catch in the act the bad boy who is
making the mischief.
Gaunt and ungainly the man, and somewhat
stilted in posture,
Sparse was the beard, each hair from his visage
shot out like a bristle
Ready to stick and to prick any person approaching
too near him,
Even the kiss of Typtodes had the keen point of
a briar.

Thin was the nap on his garment, exact each step
that he took there,
Always the branch of the laurel he held in his
hand while walking
Had in its swaying upward and downward the
look of precision.

Sharp was the thrust of his eye, as it peered from
the hole of the eyebrows,

Slightly barbed was the point of his nose, no
mercy allowing,

No escape for the foe; his whole visage seemed
pointed and ready,

Even his look was a cut and his tongue had two
edges of sharpness.

Yet the man had his virtues — industry, feeling
of duty,

Faith in knowledge he never gave up, in spite of
reverses,

And, on the whole, he believed in the movement
of men to the better.

Bearer of light to Chios he was, when the day
was beginning,

Homer he was not, and yet but for him there had
been no Homer,

Whom he first put into script from the word and
made everlasting,

By the skill which he had in tracing Phœnician
letters.

This fair day he has come to have a good visit
with Homer,

Whom as a man he liked, as a fellow-craftsman
respected,
Deeming himself to be, however, the much better poet,
Though the world had passed on the men a different judgment.

He had heard of the beauty, too, of the daughter
of Homer ;
Living in the same town all his life he never had
seen her,
Never had seen her, though knowing by heart
every word of her parent.
Not too young to be curious, not too old was
Typtodes,
Pedagogue Chian who sought for a glimpse of
the beautiful maiden,
Though, of course, he pretended to come for a
chat with the father.

Settled down in his seat he began to talk of his
methods,
How the rule had been found, and the glory was
great of the finder.
“ Yes, methinks I have brought to perfection this
science of teaching !
Surely not much will the schoolmaster have to be
doing hereafter
But to follow, ages on ages, the steps of Typtodes.

What great progress to-day we are making in
every department !
Some weeks ago a new churn was invented by
Phagon of Samos,
Hither he brought it at once and showed it around
in our island ;
Soon each household of Chios will have it, soon
will be churning,
Churning away for dear life the milk of the kine
of the country ;
Barbarous oil-eating Greeks will change into
eaters of butter,
That is improvement, that, I call, the grand
march of the species !
Only one fear I cannot help feeling amid all our
progress ;
All the world will have nothing to do , and so will
do nothing,
After that we are gone, and have left it the fruit
of our labor ;
Idleness is the great curse, our children will have
to be idle ;
Such is my fear ; so I one day have resolved to
take easy ;
Having dismissed my school, I would dally awhile
in your garden,
Leave the words of the poem behind and talk with
the poet."

Here he stopped for a moment and slyly was
peeping around him,

Once, twice, thrice he looked, and every look was
a question,
Asking, "Where, I wonder?" but without any
answer,
Though he could hear a sweet stray note now and
then from an arbor.
In its stead unwilling he heard the voice of old
Homer:
"Friend, have you any new light on the dark way
of life? — O give it —
Some fresh word upon fate or the law or the
wonderful secret;
Eyesight is gone, and often I feel the bounds of
my insight;
Often I feel the bounds of the word in the stress
of the spirit."

Then began in the height of his mood the peda-
gogue Chian:
"We have lately been reading, or rather reciting
your poems,
Since in the school or the market they still for
the ear are recited,
Though I myself can read those recent Phœnician
symbols,
Catching the sound of the voice in the devious
tracery of letters;
I alone of all of the men in the island of Chios,
I can wind out the labyrinth weird made of
strange Alpha-Beta,

Follow the clew to the end and bring back the
prize that is hidden,
Hidden away by a spell in the heart of the char-
acters mystic.
Into those signs I have been transforming the
voice of your verses,
Scratching the musical sound into signs which
now are called letters,
Magical symbols of fast-fleeting speech, which
fix it forever,
Holding it firm to the sight when the tongue
which spake it, is silent.
But not yet I have seen your beautiful daughter,
Homerus,
Whom Fame whispers abroad in every nook of
our Hellas."

"O good man," said the poet, "aught more
would I hear of this wonder,
Which has caught and is holding the word to
make it eternal;
Fate forbids me to see it, Oh then let me learn of
the marvel
Changing the world at a stroke by giving the past
to the future."

Crabbed Typtodes perchance was not pleased
with the turn of the answer,
But he began on the spot to speak out the thing
that was in him:

“ Let that pass — all that which I said of Phœnician letters.

We have glanced these days down into the depths of your poems ;

Now I am going to speak you the word of friendship and frankness.

You, I find, are not accurate, shifting the dates of your action,

Not quite correct in the facts, and you give your twist to the story.

All your tales of the Gods are turned to the bent of your thinking,

Somehow changed from the old they seem to be bearing your impress.

Often you make in your spring important mistakes in the measure,

Short where it ought to be long, and long where it ought to be shortened,

Forcing the stress of the voice in places where it belongs not.

And I hold the hexameter is not fit for your poem,

Which, so rapid in movement, should not be delayed by the meter ;

If you only had asked me, I could have told you a better.

Nay, I deem that measure not suitable to the Greek language,

Which has a boisterous genius not to be swaddled in long clothes ;

You should remember from Troy the Greeks no
longer are babies.
Hark to a verse of your poem, describing far-
darting Apollo,
Which should be simple and rapid and grand,
divine in its movement;
Slowly it drags along and cumpers its flight with
its lumber,
Then at the end it suddenly whisks and swashes
its tail round.
What a blasphemy! Phœbus will take from his
quiver an arrow,
Sly invisible arrow, penalty due to the Muses,
Put the notch to the bow-string and pull it — be-
hold! who is stricken!"

Warmed to his work was shrilly Typtodes,
and so he continued,
Cruelly lashing himself into slashing to frag-
ments the poet:
"And that mixture of words from every part of
our Hellas,
Mixture poetic of fragments of speech from
island and mainland,
Doric, Ionic, Æolic, how can it ever be lasting?
It is a wonder that people to-day are willing to
hear it;
No such jargon has ever been spoken by Greek
or Barbarian,

Crumbs from the table of tongues — and that is
the language of Homer.
Though to nature it be not kin, still I put it in
writing,
And I study it too, though I have to tear it to
fragments;
What seems substance turns in my hands to the
flimsiest shadow,
I confess I have pleasure in knocking nothing to
pieces,
All to pieces I knock it so that it appears to be
something.”

Satisfied well with his work, Typtodes contin-
ued in judgment:
“Nor are your characters always consistent,
however heroic,
Diomed changes, Ulysses is never the same in
two stories,
And your implacable Hero is placated twice in
his anger.
Homer himself is never the same, but shifts to
another,
Dozens and dozens of Homers I find ensconced
in your verses.
Your large poem doth fall of itself into many
small poems,
Which, I know, were sung by hundreds of singers
before you,

Who were the primitive makers of what you have
gathered and taken ;
You are but a collection of songs, a string of
loose ballads,
You are not one and a plan, but many you are
and planless.
Now I shall state to your face the final result of
my wisdom :
Homer, aye Homer himself is not the true author
of Homer."

Up rose the pedagogue Chian and stretched to
the height of his stature,
Whirled his ponderous arm as if a boy he were
flogging,
Slashing the verses of Homer, a pupil he seemed
to be thrashing,
Terrible pedagogue Chian, the slasher and
thrasher Tryptodes.

But in response he called up the cheerful humor
of Homer :
"Take my book and study it further ; perchance
you can read it
In that new sort of script which you say has come
from Phœnicia.
One is the book if you are one and can ever be
happy,
Wholeness first being found in yourself, is found
then outside you,

I am halved and quartered if you are a half or a
quarter,
But a whole I shall be, if you are a whole in my
study;
Discord enough you will find in my poem, if you
be discordant,
Discord enough in the world if harmony to you
be wanting.
But those wonderful letters — would I might see
them and read them !
Ere I pass from this earth, I would know the
Phœnician letters !”

Mild was the manner and sweet was the voice
of the godlike singer,
Dropping transparent as pearls the beautiful
words of his wisdom,
Showing in chilly old age the upspring of young
aspiration.
But that terrible fragment of man, the trouncer
Typtodes,
Spake once more, and showed in his voice a dash
of resentment :
“ My next business will be to cut up your book
into ballads,
I shall put the keen knife of this brain to each
joint of your body,
Though I be but a half or a quarter, or less than
a quarter,

You shall be smaller than I am, you I shall chop
into mince-meat."

"In dissecting, oft the dissector himself is
dissected;

What to another he fits, may fit just the fitter,"
said Homer.

"What a prophet you are? In you I foresee the
grand army

Who will cut me and stab me with every sort of
a weapon,

Gashing and slashing my whole poetical body
to fragments.

Still I affirm your army so grand can never defeat
me,

I shall remain as I am, the wounds will return to
the giver.

But let us stop this pitiful wrangle, it wholly
untunes me;

Harmony, wisdom, hope it hath not, but ends in
mere nothing.

Cheerful now let us pour to the Gods a hearty
libation,

Then let us pour to ourselves a good draught in
the warmth of our worship."

Mellowed at once to the rhythm of wine Typ-
todes gave answer:

"Now you are truly a poet, with fresh inspira-
tion you touch me;

Wine is a poem in drops, which you easily sip in
small verselets;
That hexameter which you just made while urg-
ing libation,
Was a good one — the best, to my taste, you
ever have spoken.
Better, I think, I shall now understand the drift
of your verses.”

Look! a beautiful figure has flitted past to the
garden;
Is it a sudden dream, a phantom of vision fan-
tastic?
No; Typtodes has caught a glimpse of the
daughter of Homer,
Caught one fitful glimpse of the shape of the
beautiful maiden,
More he longed for and looked for, but he re-
ceived not the second.

“Now I would know,” he said, “how you build
with such skill your grand temple,
How you turn your soul into music that flows in
your measures,
How you turn all the world into harmony wedded
to beauty,
How you call down the Gods themselves from the
heights of Olympus?”
“Bravely,” the poet replied, “you aim at the
white of the mark now;

But it is not my calling to point out the path of
the Muses

In their flight through the air down to men from
the top of Parnassus.

Surely enough it is if I hear them when they are
singing,

And repeat their melodious strain in its fullness
to mortals.

Faint is the note at first, but it goes on extending
and swelling,

Till it sweeps to its musical train the whole earth
and the heaven,

Tuning the discord below and above, of men and
of Gods too."

"But whence cometh the world of the Gods and
their sway on Olympus?

To the beginning I wish to return and make my
inquiry."

So spake Typtodes, when a new figure rose
over a hillock

Walking out of the distance, amid the orchard of
olives.

"Aye, whence cometh the man, who goes to the
Houses of Hades?

What is he here for — the mortal of clay once
shaped by Prometheus?

And the woman, his mate, the beautiful, fateful,
what is she?"

Asking he glanced to the right and the left for
the daughter of Homer,
Nowhere he saw her, but in her stead he beheld
through the leaflets,
Slowly approaching, the man he had seen before
in the distance.

Such were the questions which eager Typtodes
put to Homerus,
Who replied not, but seemed of something else to
be thinking.
Hark to the groan of the gate which suddenly
grinds on its hinges!

VII.

Melpomene.

The Singer of Ascrea.

ARGUMENT.

The person approaching turns out to be Hesiod, the poet of Ascra in Bæotia, whom Homer had met in his travels and whom he had invited to come on a visit to Chios. Hesiod is received by his brother poet, and tells his story of the Gods, and his view of the world. He, too, will see and know the daughter of Homer, though he has no good opinion of woman. Finally he beholds her, when, for a sarcasm on her sex, she gives him a tart reply. The old Greek misogynist and pessimist slips away from the company, and vanishes out of Chios at the appearance of another woman, the songstress of Lesbos.

All start up at the stridulous sound to see what is
coming,
When a stranger moves into the path of the
eye to the heavens,
Leisurely comes down the walk which leads to the
garden of Homer,
Beautiful garden of fruit and of flowers, of shade
and of sunshine.
Broad and bony the hand of the man, and
knotted the knuckles,
Trained to whirling the ax by the helve in the
woods on the mountain,
Trained to holding the plow by the handle in
turning the furrow,
Used to toil were his palms, and hardened to
horn by his labor.

Great strong lines he had in his face dividing it
crosswise,
Also dividing it lengthwise to network of valley and mountain,
Which would rise and fall into billows of rough corrugations :
Surely that face was a battle, the battle of Gods and of Titans,
Seizing and hurling volcanoes aflame in their wrath at each other.
Under his features was lying a scowl, which seemed to be born there,
Which would dart from its lair in his look, spitting fire like a dragon ;
Strange was the tone of his speech, yet stranger his play of grimaces,
Lips would writhe at each word, as if it were sore to be spoken.
Hark ! he is ready to speak and turns to the poet of Chios :

“ Over the sea I have come in a ship from the mainland of Hellas ;
Voyage unblest, for Poseidon was trying each minute to drown me,
Dashing his waves on the craft and mightily cleaving the waters ;
Often he opened his jaws and shut them tight on the vessel,

How I escaped I know not, but salted and scared
I escaped him.

Heavy Bœotia is my home, my village is Ascra,
Ugly village of Ascra, vile in the summer and
winter.

There I sang of the Birth of the Gods and the
Works of poor mortals,
Mortals, who sweating and swinking in life, die
at last in a discord."

"What a note is that in the sunlight of Chios,"
cried Homer,

"Who art thou, man? Some tricks of thy voice
I have heard in my travels."

Twisting his face into scowls, as if he were tasting
of wormwood,

Spake the poet of Ascra, and spitefully spat out
the bitter:

"Well thou knowest, for thou hast borrowed
some of my verses,

Hiding the source in a word, thou hast called it
the breath of the Muses.

Once I sang for thee when thou hadst come to
my home in thy journey,

Sang of the eldest Gods who were born of Chaos
primeval,

For I like to go back to the start, though it be
all in darkness,

Origin ever I seek, although I can never quite
reach it.

What a pleasure to run from the sheen of the
sun back to nothing!
This Olympian order of thine, it came of disorder,
Which is my burden of song reaching back to
the very beginning;
Even this beautiful day now sporting in joy of
the sunshine,
Not long ago was born of the night and to night
it returneth."

"Hail, O brother," said Homer, the bard, to
the poet of Ascrea,
"I have heard thee before on Helicon — now I
remember —
Bleak was the day and hoarse was the wind that
blew up the valley.
Be at home, O guest; give us more of thy song —
I would listen."

Then again the poet of Ascrea seemed tasting of
wormwood,
Ere his strain he began in the stress of a mighty
upheaval;
Soon into thunderous words he let out the soul
of old Chaos:
"All this isle, this world, as we see it, was once
but a monster,
Peopled with monsters grim in the grey of the
distant aforetime;

There I love to dwell with old Cronus who swallowed his offspring,
Even to Uranus oft I go back for a gaze in the twilight,
And I dally with Nereus, parent of beautiful daughters,
Thousandfold forms of the billows rising, rolling, retreating,
Fleeting forever away in the haze of the distant horizon,
Leaping anew into life as they rise to the top of the sea-swell.
O for the mightiest monsters of old! I tell you,
I like them ;
All day long I could sing of the terrible brood of the Gorgons,
Triple-headed, hundred-handed, thousand-legged, Cerberus, Briareus, Hydra, Chimæra, Echidna the lizard ;
What is Olympus to these, with its Gods who dwell in the sunshine !
Once in this world lived a people I loved — the Giants and Titans,
Who could hurl as weapons of war huge mountains and rivers,
Heaven itself they would storm and break down the limit of mortals,
Which the Gods once set in their envy when man they created.

Long the battle was fought, the stormers of
 heaven were vanquished,
Now see them whirl — down, down they spin to
 Tartarus sooty,
By the Olympians whisked off the earth-ball to
 infinite spaces,
Where they lie under ban of falling, falling for-
 ever.
Still in the Upperworld sunny they wrought for
 the ages great wonders;
This fair island, this sea, yon mountains are
 showing their power.
Lofty, grandiloquent words are my colors, by
 which I can paint them,
Words that are sung in mine ear by the high
 Heliconian Muses,
Loving the mighty and monstrous and piling up
 horror on horror ”

“ Hold, for mercy ! ” cried Homer, “ let me
 catch breath for a moment,
For I seem to be falling, falling along with your
 Titans,
Down to black Tartarus whirling I spin in a
 spiral headforemost.
Poet, is there no light in your world, no beauti-
 ful order ? ”

Curling his lip to a scowl, responded the singer
 of Ascrea :

“ I cannot say that I like your Olympian sun-
shine, Homerus,
All of your deities stand too clear in the sweep
of my eyesight,
Cut into words they walk as if they were moving
to marble,
Gods in my thought should break over bounds
into limitless regions,
Break over all of the forms of fair life into in-
finite fancy.
Give me the view far away o’er the deeps of
Oceanus hoary,
And his thousands of children with all the dim
train of the sea-gods,
Breaking, creating their shapes with every new
dash of the wavelet,
Riding the steeds of the sea and leaping from
billow to billow.
Homer, I come to pay thee a visit once promised
at Ascera;
And I have heard of a beautiful maiden now
dwelling in Chios.”
“ Welcome again, O friend,” said Homer;
“ some wine in a goblet,
Speed thee Amyntas, my boy — some Chian wine
for the poet.”

But the musical guest in response made a face
full of discord,
For in spite of himself he longed to behold the
fair daughter.

Disappointed, he turned once more to the tale of
his terrors:

“Dragons I love, if human, and forms of the
sphinxes and griffons,

Forms commingled of man and of beast, which
sprang from the Orient.

You, O Homer, have driven my monsters away
to the background,

Far in the background of Hellas they lie under
curse of your spirit,

Where they will stay by your spell, I fear, in
the darkness forever.

— No, again they will rise,” spake the poet of
Ascera prophetic,

“ Out of the night they will rise and bask in the
sheen of Apollo,

Far in the future I see them step to the light
from their hiding,

They will riot around in the world as in times of
the Titans,

Storming Olympus again in the might of their
struggle for heaven,

They will battle with Gods on the earth and the
air and the ocean,

Till the Underworld sunless will rumble and
quake in its terror.”

Here a youth stepped forth, he had recently
come from the Northland,

Tall Hesperion, who from a dream had been
roused by the story,

Roused by the mention of Giants, the dwellers of
mountain and iceberg,

Calling to mind his own far country in landscape
and legend.

Thus he spake in response to the poet of Ascra
foretelling :

“ Truth you have spoken, I know it ; those mon-
sters are living and thriving

Just at this moment far up in the nebulous tract
of the Northland

Where they fight with the fire and sport with the
frost of the icefield ;

Mighty and massive those Giants of cold, the
Hyperboréans,

Never I thought I would find them here in the
sunbeams of Hellas,

Even in story I did not expect to be told of their
wonders,

Though they be sitting in Tartarus sooty, the
cheerless, the hopeless.

Tell me your name, O stranger, for I would
carry it with me,

When I return to my land with the name and the
song of great Homer,

Both of you banded together shall go to my home
in the Northland.”

With a gleam of rude joy responded the singer
of Ascra,

Fame he reproached and despised and yet he
longed to be famous :

“ I am called Hesiod, younger in song than
Homer, yet older,
Earliest Gods I have sung and the latest of all —
Prometheus,
Friend of poor lost man, and the sufferer, too, for
his goodness;
Sufferer God-born he lay in his anguish on Cau-
casus lonely.
But the strange spell of my life! I cannot get
rid of the woman!
On me has rested a curse, the curse of that
charmer Pandora,
Once created by Zeus, endowed by each God with
his talent,
Born with craft in her heart, then sent upon man
for his evil.
Off and away! good Homer, I whisper the hope
of my journey!
Much I have heard in my land of a girl now grown
to a woman,
Can I not see, perchance, now converse with the
beautiful maiden?
Vain is my visit to-day if I see not the daughter
of Homer;
More than Helen she is, aye more than the gifted
Pandora.”

“ Here comes Amyntas,” said Homer, “ bear-
ing the fragrance of Chios;
What a perfume of the wine as he steps in the
gate of the garden!

Well, that boy is a flower that blooms with the
scent of old Bacchus!

I can trace his path in the air without hear-
ing his footstep.

Drink now a cupful of tears that were shed on the
beautiful island,

Tears of the wine-god which tell not the sorrow
but joy of the godhood."

Hesiod turned up the cup, and drank off the
vintage of Chios,
Generous vintage of Chios, that lightens the soul
of the singer.

And that cup was a wonder, with figures that
danced in a circle,

Forms of maidens and youths that danced in a
ring round the wine-cup,

Wrought by the cunning of Chalcon the smith, and
given to Homer,

When in his youth he sang for the prize and won
in the contest,

Won the fair prize in a contest with deep-toned
Ariston his teacher.

So they sipped off the wine from their beakers a
moment in silence,

Hesiod, Homer, the great Greek singers were sip-
ping together

There in Chios the wine that is good for the Gods
and us mortals,

Good for libations to Gods and a slaking of thirst
unto mortals.

Soon they were done, for they loved, not the
frenzy, but joy of the wine-god.

“Dearest my daughter, where art thou?

Come hither and lead me,” said Homer.

But he heard no response, so he called out again:

Praxilla!

What is the matter? where is the maiden? Gone
on an errand?

No, she was looking just then in a dream from
a nook of her arbor,

Whence she could gaze on the fair-haired, blue-
eyed youth of the Northland,

Wondering what she would do if she went to
the folk of the icefields.

Of a sudden she woke from her wonder and
sprang to her father,

Speaking mid blushes: “I was not gone, behold,
I am present.”

But the flashes of red spake louder that what
she had spoken,

Truer than words in telling the truth of the heart
that is hidden.

Then they passed from the house for a stroll
mid the trees and the vineyard,

All together they went—the youths, the guests
and the maiden.

Shady the roof overhead of the leaves and the
twigs and the tendrils,

Leaves of the olive with silvery sparkle in sun-
beams of Chios,
Tendrils of grapevines that clasped the twigs
in tender embraces,
Hinting of love in a bower to hearts that are
young, and to old ones.

Hesiod saw with delight the beautiful daughter
of Homer,
Every seam of his face was illumed with the
torches of Eros,
Fled are the monsters aforetime, ended the battle
of Titans,
And the wormwood of words is turning to sweet-
ness of honey ;
Glances he cast on the maiden and coined them
to lines of a poet.
Singer of Ascra, thou hast forgotten thy tale
of Pandora !

Also Typtodes beheld in a joy the daughter of
Homer,
For the pedagogue too was a man, though dry in
his learning,
Dry the vast heap of his learning, but it would
make a great bonfire,
If but one little spark would snap from the flamelet
of Eros,
Fall on the ponderous pile and suddenly set it to
blazing.

O Typtodes, pedagogue Chian, what are these
flashes !

Thou hast forgotten thy letters, forgotten the
symbols Phœnician.

So they walked and they talked till they came
to the view of the waters,
Wondering came they at once to the side of the
sea everlasting
Rolling its waves from beyond and beyond, far
over the vision,
Over the tremulous line where heaven and earth
run together,
Where the God may be seen as he comes and de-
parts from the mortal.
Nearest the billow that broke on the beach stood
the maiden Praxilla,
Just behind her with look o'er the sea stood
youthful Hesperion.

All of them gazed at the waves, and thought-
fully dropped into silence,
Seeming to peep far over the bound of the bend-
ing horizon
Into the realm beyond for a moment, and hear
its low music,
Feeling a gentle attunement of soul to the beat
of the billows,
Telling the pulse of the world that is coming, the
world that is going.

List to a voice! a herald is hurrying out of the
city,
Running along the white sand of the margin that
gleamed in the sunshine;
“Hearken,” he cried, “I announce the approach
of the sovereign woman,
Poetess come from the Lesbian isle to pay hom-
age to Homer.”
“What! a woman poetic!” broke out old Hesiod
crabbed,
With a twinge in his lips as if tasting his words
that were wormwood,
With a whirl of his fist as if fighting the Gods
like a Titan:
“What new evil is born to the suffering race of us
mortals!
This last woman, methinks, is worse, far worse
than the first one,
With the gift of her verses she comes, far worse
than Pandora.”

“Hater of woman!” quickly responded the
daughter of Homer,
Why are your Muses women, your own Heli-
conian Muses?
Long I have known of you here, I have heard
that tale of Pandora,
Shameless! you have in that tale besmirched the
mother that bore you.”

Off slipped the poet of Askra through a lone
path by the sea-shore,
Thinking to catch some vessel awaiting the breezes
for Hellas,
Eager to quit the sunshine of Chios for heavy
Bœotia,
Leaving the Gods of Olympus, to dwell once more
with the Titans.
Surly he sauntered along by himself till he
passed out of vision,
Hapless poet of Askra, dismissed by the daughter
of Homer.

Meanwhile the rest of the people went back
from the sea to the garden,
Where they sat down on the stones which were
seats for the guests in a circle,
Waiting to hear the first notes of the beautiful
songstress of Lesbos,
And with a festival high and a hymn to receive
her with honor.

VIII.

Thalia.

The Songstress of Lesbos.

ARGUMENT.

The person heralded is Sappho, a poetess of the island of Lesbos, and ancestress of the later more famous Sappho. She had caught from Homer the spirit of song in her youth, and now she comes to tell him her gratitude for what he had done. She thinks that Homer, through his story of Helen, had helped to save all women of Greece, herself included, from the fate of Helen. She crowns Homer with a garland for his other pictures of noble women, those found in the Odyssey. At this point the daughter of Homer steps forward and asks Sappho concerning a secret. Hesperion, who has listened to the songstress and has heard her songs before, comes forward and asks a similar question. The result is, the two lovers are brought together through Sappho, the poetess of love. But they are suddenly separated by the warning sound of a trumpet.

Who could it be that had come from the
neighboring island of Lesbos,
Lovely island of love, and the home of the lyre
of Hellas?

It was Sappho, beautiful Sappho, poetess tender,
Singing ancestress of many a Sappho still greater
than she was,

Sister own of the Muses, the sister too of the
Graces,

Breathing the heart of her sex into strains of the
sweetest of music,

Bearing the beautiful name to be borne by her
children hereafter,

Sappho, melodious Sappho, first name of the
songstress of Hellas.

Many a Lesbian woman she gave of her
musical dower,
Tunefully sharing the gift of her song to the soul
that might need it,
All of them singing of love with the joy, the
triumph, the sorrow,
Tasting the magical drop which wings with a word
the sweet senses —
Lesbian bees that lit on each beautiful flower
of nature,
Busily culling in song the bitter-sweet honey of
passion.

Sappho already had sung for the prize in a
contest with Homer,
Years ago that was, when she was the bloom
of a morning,
But when he was a noonday turning and looking
to sundown.
Both of them sang before judges — the prize was
a new-made tripod,
Fashioned to life by Chalcon with dexterous
strokes of the hammer,
That it seemed ready to step and to walk while
standing forever.
High and mighty the judges taken from lords
of the islands,
And from rulers of cities on mainland, all of
them greybeards;
Rigid and just they were deemed in settling dis-
putes of the people,

Rigid and just were the judges, and still she had
won before singing.

See but the gleam of her eye, no furrow of frost
can resist it!

Every heart she had won by her look, and away
went the tripod;

She herself was the song that sang more sweetly
than Homer,

Love and beauty were hers while singing of love
and of beauty,

She was the prize herself, the prize of the Gods
to the winner.

No true Greek could ever behold her, not hoping
possession.

So the tripod she easily won from the first of
the poets,

By the decree of the judges, whose law she took
in her triumph,

Took too the hearts of the greybeards along,
and they could not help it;

Homer himself in their place had not given
another decision,

Homer had turned against Homer, had he been
one of the judges.

But to-day she harbored no thought to tell of
that triumph,

Rather ashamed she was, for she knew the power
that gave it.

Years had brought to her life the golden return
 of their harvest,
Still not chilling the warmth and the glow of the
 Lesbian summer.
Not too young in her folly, not too old in her
 wisdom,
Almost repentant her spirit looked out on the
 world from its windows,
Casting its glances adown as if it had a con-
 fession.
Stately she moved, yet modest, into the presence
 of Homer;
Courteous welcome he gave to the songstress,
 when she began speaking,
Not in her own soft cadence, but tuned to the
 sweep of his measures:

“Thee, O fatherly singer, I come to visit in
 Chios,
Chios, thy beautiful island, fair sister it is to my
 Lesbos;
I would behold thee once more in the living form
 of thy features,
Ere thou pass to Elysian fields, last home of the
 poets,
Who shall dwell as spirits beyond in the house of
 their genius,
House of high fantasy built, material stronger
 than granite,

Holding eternal the echo of musical strains of the
singer.
There among thine own Heroes, there abiding
forever,
Thou the Hero shalt be thyself — in the deed the
first Hero ;
For of all thy great people of song, thou sing-
ing art greatest,
Singing high actions of men thine action itself is
the highest.
There I too, a poet mid happy Elysian meadows,
Hope in the sound of thy song with thee to be
living immortal.
But to-day I have come once more in the sun-
shine to listen,
I would hear thee again this side of the pitiless
earth-stream,
And would speak thee a word — not to thee but
to me it is needful,
Bringing thy soul nearer mine — the word of
sweet recognition.”

“ Aye, it is sweet, that word,” interrupted the
poet good-humored,
“ Even to age it is sweet, for myself I do not
deny it ;
More I would hear of thy strain, so deftly thou
turnest thy measures.”

Seeing herself reflected in Homer, the song-
stress continued :

“ Long ago I first heard thee attune the high lay
in my Lesbos,
I was a girl in my home, and thou wert a wan-
dering minstrel,
Who went singing through Hellas the wrath of
the Hero Achilles,
Singing the fateful, dolorous tale of the beautiful
woman,
Wandering, singing, and tuning thy song to the
hearts of the Hellenes.
Helpful thou spakest to me in the bloom and the
peril of girlhood,
Mighty thy voice in my heart just then in the
struggle of woman ;
At thy command my soul was set free and broke
forth into measures,
Irresistible measures of longing in Lesbian music.
Secretly sang I my earliest notes to a circle of
maidens,
Who would listen and love along with the tender
vibrations,
Singing the strains of the song and touching the
strings of the cithern.
That was after I heard thee hymning the story of
Helen,
How she was blinded and sank in the spell of
sweet Aphrodite,
Though the Goddess she fought and rated with
heavy reproaches ;

How by Paris of Troy she then was led from her
 husband,
Going, unwilling to go, and yielding though
 always refusing,
Driving the Trojan away, yet drawing him back
 by denial,
No was the word of her tongue, but Yes the
 response of her action."

Here she stopped for a moment and looked
 abashed at her daring,
Thought unspoken when born into speech has in
 it a demon,
Who oft leaps from the sound of the word and
 frightens the speaker,
Till the courage returns to speak out the heart
 of the matter.
Poetess was the Lesbian, having the right to her
 color,
Having the duty to utter the truth of herself in
 her singing;
Warm were the tones and strong were the tints
 of the thoughts that she painted;
Though her words seemed growing forbidden,
 courageous began she:
"Must I confess it? Helen I felt in myself at
 that moment!
All of the bliss and the blight of her love swept
 over my heart strings,

Touching them lightly at first, then smiting them
harder and harder,
As if I were a lyre by fingers of Fates to be
played on,
Thrilling to music the ebb and the flow of the
ocean within me,
Making the billowy passion sing to a measure
responsive !
Willing unwilling, fated yet free, to myself but
a battle !
Yes, I confess, the Goddess I felt, the Goddess
resistless,
Driving me forward to do as did the beautiful
woman,
Whispering dulcet commands in words of divin-
ity's power.
Yet Aphrodite but spoke to what was within me
already,
Willing, unwilling, fated yet free — ye Gods, how
she smote me !
Till through the cleft of my heart I could see
down, down to its bottom !
With the prize of the fairest, the penalty too has
been given,
With the beautiful women is chained the spite of
a Fury,
Who doth secretly lurk in the gift of the Gods to
the mortal.
But I stand not alone, for all I now stand in thy
presence :

Every wife in Lesbos, in Chios, in all the Greek
islands,
And on mainland too, through Hellas, through
midland of Argos,
Far in the isles of the West and over the sea to
the sundown,
Has that danger of Helen, the lapse of the soul
in its loving,
With the vengeance that follows the joy and the
glory of beauty.
In thy story a witness I was of all that I might
be,
Saw the dread ghost of myself and fled from the
horrible specter!
Homer, my father, thou hast saved me from be-
ing a Helen,
In thy song thou hast suffered and saved all men
and all women
Winning thy soul to themselves in its story of
trial and rescue.
I had been taken to Troy, if thy word had never
been spoken,
All the daughters of Greece thou hast rescued
from fleeing with Paris,
Though his city has fallen, again he had come to
Achæa,
Were it not that thy song keeps the warning alive
and the judgment.
Troy still stands in the world and holds in its
citadel Helen,

Only in song, thy song, is it taken forever, O
Homer."

There she stopped on the height of her thought,
the Lesbian songstress,
Whence she could see far over the sky-bound
limit of Hellas;
Soon in sweet low tones responded the poet
prophetic:

"Gracious words thou hast spoken and dear to
me, beautiful woman;
Singing the peril of beauty in soft, warm words
of thy measures;
Muse among Muses the tenth for thy strain hence-
forth I shall name thee,
Aye, for thy love the tenth Muse I shall name
thee to nations hereafter,
Who thy honor will sing beyond the far streams
of the Ocean,
First of the women of Hellas to build the melo-
dious poem,
Chastely chanting thy lay to the wives and maid-
ens of Lesbos.
Thou wilt be followed by thousands of songsters
along down the ages,
Thine is the musical prelude of forests of night-
ingales singing.
Women preserve the story and song as they
nourish their infants,

Who must be reared on the voice as well as the
milk of the mother;
Nature makes her sing, she must die or sing to
her baby;
Motherly harmony is her first gift to her child,
and the greatest.
What a world I see rising before me, the world
of the woman!
Beautiful Helen again shall be sung, aye, more,
she shall sing too,
Taking herself Troy town, not conquered but
conquering Paris;
She shall be the new Hero Achilles, in action
heroic,
Gods! as I see I must speak! she also shall be
the new Homer."

Down fell the word like a blow, surprising
even the speaker,
Who by the spur prophetic was driven beyond
his own knowledge;
But on the spot she snatched up the talk, that
Lesbian songstress,
For she still had a weight on her heart to be
lifted by speaking:
"How we look at ourselves in thy tale of the
beautiful woman!
Our warm heart thou hast felt, its ready response
and the peril.

All our circle is drawn, the trial, the fall and the
sorrow,
Then the return of the soul, the rise and the
grand restoration ;
Helen estranged is restored to her own, restored
to herself too.
In her marvelous tale I can see the past and the
future,
All the life of our people unfold to the story
of Hellas.
But still more than Hellas I watch in the lines of
her image : —
This whole round of existence on earth, hard
destiny human,
With the rise and the drop in the struggle of good
and of evil,
Now on the up and now on the down of the life-
stroke eternal,
Measuring cycles of pain and of gain to the beat
of the master.”

Here she stopped for a moment, lost in the
reach of her thinking,
Which ran over the bounds of her speech in the
stress of her spirit;
Soon again she came back to herself and spoke
Greek unto Homer :
“Not alone the rise from the fall, thy beautiful
Helen,

But the woman unfallen is also thy gift to us
women —

She who never could lapse from herself in trial
the sorest.

Now let me crown thy brow with this wreath for
Penelope faithful,

For Arete, the mother, who dwells in the heart
of her household,

For Nausicaa too, the maid of all maidens for-
ever.

Take this gift from thy children, thou art the
father of Hellas!

Which has been born to thy song and trained to
the step of thy music,

Which will go singing thy strains down Time, in
joy and in sorrow,

With the echo repeating itself in all nations, O
Homer."

Thus spake Sappho, the soft-speaking Sappho,
sweet Lesbian songstress,

Graceful she stepped, and loving she laid on his
temples the garland,

Plucked by her hand and wove to a crown of the
leaves of the laurel.

Echoing shouts of approval rang back from the
hills and the sea-shore,

Even the wavelets, trying to walk, had come up
to the bank-side,

Trying to talk had murmured afar their billowy
answer.

Sweetly the rhythm she spoke, her spirit had
caught it from Homer,

And the heroic hexameter yielded to lips of a
woman,

Tamed by her gentle caress into lines of mel-
liferous movement,

Though it was used to the clangor and clash of
the onset of battle.

Now the poet has heard in tenderest tones of the
songstress,

Touched with Lesbian tints, the tune of his own
mighty measure

Softened quite to the whisper of love in its deli-
cate cadence,

Sung in praise of himself for singing the praises
of woman,

Showing her highest worth, not sparing her blame-
ful in error.

Fairest reward of the bard, when he harks to the
heart of his verses

Beating out of a bosom that throbs in a joy to his
music,

Flowing from lips that he loves, like a soft suc-
cession of kisses.

But behold! another fair woman steps up to
the front-line,

Forward she moves to that presence, it is the
daughter of Homer,
Who in a gleam of her sunshine embraces the
songstress of Lesbos,
And then speaks in low tones what her looks al-
ready are telling:
“Thou hast uttered the word of my heart to thy
music, O Sappho,
Word which often has beaten the wall of my lips
for deliverance,
Always in vain, for left to myself I never can
say it;
But in the warmth of thy speech I can feel the
hot beat of my bosom,
And that struggle of thine and of Helen’s has
sung me my battle.
Deep is the joy of my soul, and yet I have with
it a trembling,
I have given myself all away, and yet I must
keep me,
Sweet is every moment of life, and yet it is
bitter.
What is this riddle of pleasure in pain and of
pain in pleasure?
Would I might fly from myself, and yet to my-
self I would fly then.
Tell me the great surrender which will restore me
my freedom,
Speak it again, the magical word, the word of my
weal now,

Overmaking me wholly in hope of the time of
my ransom.
I would bathe in the stream of thy song as in
waters of healing,
At thy voice my full heart which before had been
closed, is open,
Like the flower which bursts at the breath of the
spring from its bud-coat,
Still unwilling to show at first what is hid in its
bosom."

What does this mystery mean which lurks in
the speech of the maiden?
Not quite clear to herself is the meaning of what
she has uttered ;
Nearer the Lesbian songstress she drew, confid-
ing in glances,
Then in a whisper she spake, the beautiful daugh-
ter of Homer,
Clinging to Sappho, soft-speaking Sappho, the
helper of love-pain:
" Tell me the story once more thou hast told so
often already,
I can hear it again from thy lips and never grow
weary,
I would hearken thy heart and live in the strains
of its music ;
Sappho, O Sappho, what is this love of the youth
and the maiden,

Which thou singest in hundreds of songs to the
sónorous cithern?"

Scarce had ended the speech when both were
aware of another
Who had entered their thought and stood by
himself in their presence;
Both looked hastily up, it was the fair youth
of the Northland
Ready to speak, and his glances held the two
women asunder,
Since the one of them blushed, and the other
drew back in amazement;
Warm was his accent, though neither Ionic,
Æolic, nor Doric;
Well he could say what he wanted and spake
to the Lesbian songstress:
"Thou hast uttered the word of my heart to thy
music, O Sappho;
I a stranger am here from afar, from the realm
of the frost-gods,
Thy warm breath I have felt as it wafted in words
from thy poems,
All the winter within me has melted, and I am
the summer,
Tender summer of Hellas attuned to the lyre of
Lesbos.
All the ice of the North to-day thou hast thawed
from my bosom,

As thou toldest thy tale in the tale of the beautiful woman;
Helen I was myself, and I sank in the spell of her passion,
But I was also her spouse, to Troy I would march for my Helen;
Aye, the Greek I must win, or myself I shall lose forever."

Here he stopped for a sigh, then passed to an undertone softly :
"What is this fearful joy, and yet an agony with it
Which allows no rest in the pain that is born of its pleasure?
Sweet is every moment of life, and yet it is bitter ;
I had given myself all away, before I had known it;
Tell me the cause of this hungering lingering longing for something —
Sappho, O Sappho, what is this love of the youth and maiden,
Which thou singest in hundreds of songs to the sonorous cithern? "

Smiling she touched the amorous chords with the tip of her finger,
Softly preluding the tones which turned into words in her answer :

“ Both of you have the same pain, and both of
you have the same pleasure,
Both of you sing the one song which runs to the
very same ending ;
Even the words of your lips I notice are pairing
together,
Yes, young people, I think I can tell you concern-
ing this matter,
Old is the tale to the old, yet ever is new to the
youthful,
But to the poet it never can wear off the gleam
of its freshness.
Much in myself I have studied the cause and the
cure of this trouble ;
What in longing is sighing asunder, the word
brings together,
Hear me, then, both of you, daughter of Homer
and son of the Northland :
Two are still twain and in pain, who were born
to be one and one only.
Give me two hands — I shall join them to one in
mine own at a heart-beat.”

Sappho set down her sonorous shell, to the pair
she drew nearer,
Till between them she stood and secretly reached
out on both sides,
Took two hands in her own and laid them willing
together,

Which of themselves, with a grip like Fate, were
 clasped in a promise,
While the eyes at each other shot fiery ratifica-
 tion.
Meantime the songstress was chanting a lay of
 the doings of Eros,
Singing for others she sang to relieve her own
 heart of its travail,
For the old wound, broken open, could only be
 stanchèd by the love-song.

Hark! the sound of a trumpet rolls over the
 hills in the distance!
What can it mean, interrupting this moment of
 joy by a startle?
There! once more it is rolling, it sends on its
 waves a light shudder.
Each let go the firm grip of the hand in the shock
 of the warning.

But the daughter has gone and whispered aside
 to her father;
What did she say to him there as she leaned to
 his ear with her blushes?
Joyful he was at the word and louder he spoke
 than a whisper:
“Happy I am — I have it foreseen — let me
 pledge you together;
Sorrowful too — ye both have to leave me be-
 hind — leave Hellas;

Still I feel you will take me along to the land of
the future,
Aye, you will take our Hellas along and preserve
it forever."

Louder, nearer, sterner, resounded the blast of
the trumpet,
Bearing command it seemed and bidding to wait
for the message ;
Still no person appeared, but a ruler was surely
behind it,
For authority spoke unworded in tones of the
trumpet,
Strangely attuned to the roll of the thunder, the
voice of the Heavens.

In response to the note of forewarning spake
Homer prophetic:
"Nay, not yet, not yet — the tie is not yet to be
fastened,
First this flame must be curbed and subdued to
the oracle coming,
Else it will burn down the world, like Troy, in a
grand conflagration ;
No more Helens — one Helen is surely enough
for all ages —
Bravely renounce the sweet thought, and prove
yourselves worthy, renouncing ;
Bravely renounce and renounce till the law hath
declared its fulfillment."

Louder responded to Homer the blast of the
ominous trumpet,
Louder, nearer it rolled and mingled its sound
with his sentence.
As if giving the strength of its stroke to the
words of the poet,
Who still added his warning to souls that might
be impatient:
“Something else is announced, the best is to
wait for the message;
It is near — the tramp can be heard — now wait
for the message.”

IX.

Polyhymnia.

The Psalmist of Israel.

ARGUMENT.

David, King of Israel, comes to visit Homer, having heard the songs of the Greek poet sung by Mesander, born in Cyprus, a Hellene and a representative of his race, the Hellenes (pronounced as two syllables) among Semitic peoples — Phœnicians and Hebrews. The two great poets sing for each other, and in their songs they give the Greek and the Hebrew views of the world. The poems of Homer and the psalms of David have just been written in the new alphabet of Phœnician letters; Typodes and Mesander have copies of the two works. David and Homer sing several times, each recognizes the greatness and worth of the other. They become warm friends, as from Chios they look out upon the future to the westward. Hesperion and Praxilla are betrothed, and King David stays to take part in celebrating the marriage on the morrow.

Suddenly after the sound of the trumpet that
 rolled from the mountain
Followed a wave of deep voices of song that
 swayed to the sea-swell,
Choiring in tune to the strings of the harp and
 the tones of the timbrel,
Mid the clash of the cymbals and drum, and the
 clangor of cornets,
Loudly preluding new strains to be joined to the
 music of Hellas,
First to-day, where rises melodious Chios in
 billows,
Chios, the beautiful island, whose eye is the gar-
 den of Homer.
Slowly a caravan wound through sinuous turns
 of the mountain,

Shone as it rolled into vision out of the azure
horizon ;
Over the hilltops it heaved, it seemed to be hung
from the heavens !
Gaily it glistened afar with the gleam of its gold
and its purple ;
Precious stones of the East, the onyx, the opal,
the diamond,
Peeped with a thousand eyes from the front of
the column advancing,
Peeped and sparkled and shot in a dance with the
sunbeams of Chios.

“ What high pomp of a monarch is that and
where is he going ? ”
Each one asked of his neighbor, who gave no re-
sponse to the question,
For he knew nothing to say, but stood and gazed
in his wonder.
Statelier moved the procession while nearer it
came, still nearer,
Till it had reached to the door where inside was
sitting Homerus,
Sitting not far from the hearth by the altar he
made for the Muses,
With his soul in a song he sat there and heard
what was coming.

Royally rode forth a man, dismounted and
stood at the entrance,

All the radiant train of his followers with him
dismounted ;
What a spangle of gems and twinkle of jewels
like starlight !
Dark was the eye and crispy the hair and brown
the complexion,
Strong was the curve of the nose of the King,
like the beak of an eagle,
As it darts from its fastness of rock on the cowering
rabbit.
Yet how soft lay his lip underneath the fierce
hook of the nostrils
As if nought but compassion he knew, and could
utter love only !
Merciful downward to earth and prayerful upward
to heaven
Ran his glances, while under them glowed the fire
of his daring.
In a lofty obeisance he raised up finger to forehead,
Jeweled lightnings leaped from his hand to the
eyes of beholders,
Making them blink in the flash, and answer the
sport of the sparkles.
Then he murmured low tones of a something in
syllables foreign,
To the man who stood at his side, and who
seemed to be waiting,
Eager to let the fountain of speech gush up to
the sunlight.

That was a different man from the rest of the
men of the Monarch;
Not the same turn of the features he had, and not
the same stature;
He was named Mesander—the versatile, clear-
toned Mesander,
Knower of speech, reconciler of men, interpreter
famous,
He was the tongue of the King who bade him tell
of the journey.
Hark! he is speaking, now list to his voice! his
words are Hellenic!
Thus he spoke in the rhythm and speech familiar
to Homer:

“Hail to thee, poet, thou song of the West,
and also its prophet!
Humbly we pray thee to give us to-day a glimpse
of thy treasures,
And of our own we gladly shall grant what we
can in requital.
This high Monarch has heard thy strains in the
home of his people,
Over the roar of the seas, beyond Phœnician
Sidon,
Where dwells Israel’s seed in the holy land of
Judea.
In his palace he listened with pain to the sorrows
of Priam,
Deeply forefeeling in Troy and its fall the fate
of his city,

Sacred Jerusalem, set on a hill by good Abraham's
children.

Also he followed in hope the devious path of
Ulysses,

In whose return he beheld the return of his peo-
ple from bondage,

When they fled through the sea and the wilderness
drear out of Egypt.

High beat the wish in his heart and rose to a
longing resistless,

Thee to behold, the singer of Hellas — he too is
a singer —

Ere the dark Fates of Death shall clutch thee and
hale thee to Hades.

He has stepped down from his throne to pay
thee a visit of honor,

Leaving his own far away, he has come to the
country of Javan,

Turning the point of his law, which keeps him
aloof from the stranger.

Greatest of musical Hellenes, thou, the voice of
the Muses

Singing forever down time and making thy lan-
guage eternal,

Homer, before thee stands Israel's sovereign,
singer, King David."

Such were the words of Mesander, the em-
bassy's eloquent spokesman,
He in Cyprus was born, and long he had lived
with Phœnicians,

Learning their manners and speech, when he
came as sailor to Sidon ;
Also he traded with Tyre, when Hiram was king
of the country,
Hiram, the King of rich Tyre, the friend and
ally of David.
Skillful in talking the tongues, Mesander had
seen many nations,
Noting the merits of each, he spoke the language
of concord,
Artful in dealing with men, he was often chosen
as envoy,
Wandering over the world, as interpreter came
he to Jewry,
Even a poet he was and doubly was dear to King
David.
But he remained a good Greek, although he was
born on the border,
Quite on the line where Shem and Japhet have
fought for dominion
All through the ages, and mingled in battle the
blood of their children.
Greek though he was, Mesander partook of them
both in his spirit,
Sought to keep peace between the combative
souls of the brothers,
Sought to make each understand the greatness
and worth of the other,
Deftly uniting the East and the West in the
truth that is common.

Good was the Greek and yet he was vain, the
showy Mesander
Called by the envious Hebrew, although beloved
by King David;
Vain of his gift he was, of his gift in the tongues
and in song too.
How he would strut when he made a good speech,
or perchance a good verselet !
He could put on more airs than David and Homer
together.

When Mesander had spoken, the King looked
around for a moment ;
Lo ! he is stopped in his look, he is caught in the
glance of fair Sappho,
Tranced by her face and her figure he cried :
“ What a beautiful woman !
How would she like to appear in my palace, a
daughter of Israel,
Aye, a wife to the King, and a light of Greek
beauty to Hebrews ! ”
Sappho looked on the ground, she knew the lan-
guage of glances,
Sappho knew the language of love, even when it
is silent,
Though she did not understand the Hebrew, the
language of David,
And Mesander kept still, for he honored the Les-
bian songstress.

Then to the words of Israel's Monarch re-
sponded Homerus,
“ Welcome, O friend, to the isles of the sea, to
the land of fair Hellas,
Enter my garden and home, to me thou shalt be
as a brother !
Thy great name I have heard, it was borne from
the realm of Phœnicians,
By the Tyrian princes who trade in their ships
with Greek merchants.
Sweet though faint is the shred of thy song in the
land of Achæans,
Floating over the sea from the East to the tune
of the sunrise.
How I have longed to list to your Muses, so lofty,
so holy !
Now the moment has come ere I pass into pitiless
Hades ;
Oft in my heart I have felt you had something I
had not, but needed.
Strike the harp ! sing the song ! one burst of your
heavenly music !
And of your God I would know through melo-
dious lips of his servant,
For we all have need of the God, be he one, be
he many,
Dwelling in man and the world, over Hellas en-
throned or Judea.
Tell me the story of trials I heard concerning
your people,

As from bondage it fled with its God from the
land of the Nile-stream ;
That, methinks, is the story of man, to be told
him forever,
Oft repeating itself in his life and the life of the
nations.
We the Greeks have also divinely been put under
training,
Through sore trial our Gods have tested the love
of their people,
Tested our mettle Hellenic to do the grand task
of the ages ;
Over to Troy we went and we fought ten years
for our heirship,
Asia we had to assail that we save our beautiful
Helen."

Then the dark king of the East laid off his gar-
ments of purple,
And a golden harp he took from the hand of its
holder,
Harp of ten strings to which he chanted the
praise of Jehovah.
Also his voice he essayed in a caroling upward
and downward ;
Sweet were the tones which he rapidly touched
in the strains of his prelude,
Soft were the notes which he secretly hummed
to himself for the trial,

Gently he glided to words, that wedded the
tender vibrations,
Making the measures of song which skillful
Mesander translated.
Homer hearkened, laying his soul to the lips of
King David,
Who sang Israel's strain till it filled the fair
garden of Chios:

“Happiest nation of nations I sing, whose
God is Jehovah;
Blessed forever and ever the people whom He
hath chosen,
Looking down from the heavens the children of
men He beholdeth,
Israel's children He loves, but His law is the law
of the nations.
Praise Him, my soul, the one holy God, He is the
Almighty;
Praise Him, the King of the Kings, the Monarch
of earth and of heaven,
Whose thoughts are a great deep, and His right-
eousness like a great mountain;
Trust in the Lord and do good, for He laughs at
the cunning of evil,
Its keen sword, when drawn against Him, shall
pierce its own bosom.
He is the law of the world, which to men He has
mightily given,

He is the law of the world, and He is also the
judgment.

List to His voice as it speaketh aloud in the roll
of the thunder,

See Him fold up the sea in His hand like a gar-
ment of waters,

Hark how the cedars of Lebanon crash in the
breath of His anger!

Hark to His law, ye nations: No other God is
before me."

In the might of his mood sang the King high
strains of his language,
Which Mesander the spokesman turned to the
speech of Homerus;
To the hexameter's swing he broke the wild
cadence of Hebrew,
Tuning Israel's heavenly flight to the tread of a
heathen,
Training in bounds of Greek measure the sweep
of divine aspiration.
Oft he had done so before, and now he would
peep in a scroll there,
Made of a papery rind of Egyptian reeds from
the Nile fens,
Which he held in his hand, scratched over and
over with scribblings,
Curious mystical signs which seemed to whisper
in secret,

Only by him understood was the talk of those
signs and their meaning,
Still their voice was not heard, for they talked in
a flash to his eyesight.

But at last he raised up his eyes and folded his
writing,
And in a glow he spoke, that Grecian of Cyprus,
to Homer :
“ Give him the roar of thy seas, as they rise like
Icarian billows,
Give him the swell of thy heart as it heaves in
the height of the battle,
Give him the roll of thy measures in waves of the
blue Hellespontus ;
O Mæonides, sing him thy Zeus, the God of the
Hellenes,
Father whose children are Gods who come with
their help to us mortals.
Sands of the desert below, and glories of Heaven
above us
He has sung — now give him thy concord of man
and the world here,
Give him thy concert of Earth and Olympus,
divine and the human,
And for thee I shall do what for him I have
done — translate thee.”

Softly Homer began with a prayer that fell
into measures :

“Zeus, high father of Gods and of men, Olympian father !

Son thyself of old Cronus, consumer of all of his children,

Thou has escaped from his maw and dethroned thy pitiless parent,

Who would be all to himself in the world, without even offspring.

Hear me, O Zeus, me the mortal, but loving thy worship and order !

Not by thyself dost thou rule from the top of snowy Olympus,

Highest of all thy gifts thou dost share unto others — thy godhood,

Many divinities sit in a circle majestic around thee,

Gods and goddesses too are thy sons and thy beautiful daughters,

Whom thou hast raised to thy heights and with thee hast made to be rulers,

Ruling the air and the earth and even the underworld sunless,

Ruling the man in his deed and also his innermost spirit.

Still thou art ever the first among many, in mind and in power,

And in authority over the Gods thou art surely the sovereign,

Let any deity dare to question thy might for a moment,

Down to black Tartarus whirls he to sit with the
hopeless Titans."

Skillful Mesander now did his best to turn this
to Hebrew,
Toning a word here and there to suit the fine ear
of King David,
Fitting to music the thought, as it flowed from
the heart of the singer;
But in spite of his skill, the translation ran rough
in hard places.
Free Greek speech would not always dance to
the tune of Semitic,
Homer's hexameters broke in the back at the
gait of the psalm-song,
And the Monarch would scowl when he heard of
the Gods in the plural,
Yet he would smile to himself at the noise about
beautiful Helen,
For the God of the King must be one, though his
wives may be many;
Gods of the Greek may be many, his wife is the
one, the one only,
Whom to save he is ready to fight ten years with
the Orient.

Sly Typtodes had slipped up behind and
peeped into the papers
Which the interpreter held in his hand when his
reading had ended ;

Then began to address him in whispers the pedagogue prying:
“What is that script which I see, that strange miraculous scribbling?
Have you too the mystical writ of symbols Phœnician?
Mighty it will be forever, preserving both David and Homer,
Rescued from sounds of the voice and fixed into signs for the vision.
And the schoolmaster now will have work in each new generation,
Teaching the name and the shape and the sound of the wonderful letters,
Till they together be put into words, the holders of all things.
Then the pupil will spell out the deed and the thought of aforetime,
Spurred by the sprig of the laurel held in the hand of the teacher.
That I call progress, that is the march of mankind to the better!
Nor will it stop till every youth in the land knows the letters,
Every youth in the world must know the Phœnicians symbols.”

Ere Typtodes had done, strong currents had drowned out his whisper,

Strong loud currents of song that rose from the
throat of the singer,
Overflowing all bounds of the sea when the tide
runs the highest,
And it came from the fathomless heart of Israel's
psalmist:
"Praised be Jehovah, in Him is our trust, the
God of our Fathers,
From everlasting to everlasting He is the ruler!
In the land of Egypt we toiled and we wept in
our sorrow,
Slaves were Jacob's children, but they were
never forgotten,
From the slime of the Nile we fled to the shore
of the Red Sea,
Always we saw a great hand reach out of the
cloud round about us,
Smiting the chains of our bondage and pointing
the way of our rescue.
Through the walls of the waters we crossed dry-
shod on the bottom,
Long in the wilderness forward and backward in
trial we wandered,
Till we returned to our home, the primitive home
of our Fathers,
Bearing the law in our hearts, which was given in
thunders at Sinai.
Sing, O my soul, the high song, the return to
the land of our promise,

Sing it for me and for mine, and for wandering
millions hereafter,
Millions on millions unborn, the countless sons of
the future."

As he ended he turned to Hesperion, child of
the Northland,
Into whose shadowy semblance he peered in a
wonder while singing,
For that youth had the face among faces which
look at the speaker,
Drawing him always secretly back to the spell of
its gazes,
Back to itself it draws him, unconscious of magical
power,
Showing him dreamlike glimpses of something
afar that is coming.
Thus the youth of the North attracted the look
of King David,
Who seemed glancing into futurity throned in
that visage,
Far-off futurity throned in the visage of dreamful
Hesperion,
As he stood there beside the beautiful daughter
of Homer,
Who all the future had read in the soft blue eyes
of the stranger,
Dreamful Hesperion, lately arrived from the
snows of the Northland.

Soon the poet of Hellas began once more full
of fervor,
Gently attuning his note somewhat to the music
of David:
“Singer, thou art of the East, but thy strain
belongs to the West too,
In it I hear the same voice that to me is the voice
of the Muses,
By whose help I also have sung the return of my
people,
That was the sad return of the haughty victori-
ous Argives,
Coming from Troy in their ships to their homes
on island and mainland;
Many were lost through wrath of the Gods, but
the faithful were rescued,
Though the path was doubtful and long that lay
on the waters.
Lately I finished the tale which tells the return of
Ulysses,
Who on the passionate sea had to wander with
foolish companions;
Much he endured in his heart, and much he
doubted in spirit,
Till he came back to his Ithacan home, to Pene-
lope prudent,
Where in peace he dwelt till the Fates had spun
out his life-thread.
Great the return of Israel, hymning itself in all
peoples,

Great the return of Achæa, which also will not
be forgotten.

Different may be our speech, but one at last is
the meaning,

Different may be our blood, but it all responds to
one heart-beat,

Different may be our Gods, but the Man is the
same in us both here."

Spoken the winged word, uprose divinely
Homerus,

Reaching out with his fingers, he felt for the
hand of King David,

Trip-hammer strokes of his heart beating time
to the voice of the Muses:

"Mortals may blame the Gods for their ill, but
it is their own folly,

Through themselves they must perish, ere Gods
are able to smite them,

Até is sent for by man, else even the Gods could
not send her,

What through man the divinities do, is also his
doing,

His is the deed, though the world is divine in
which he can do it.

But the one deity truly is thine, the God of the
ages,

All shall pass away, but He abideth forever.

Hear my prophecy, hear it and weigh it, con-
cerning two poets

Standing in Chios and looking afar on the worlds
in the sunset;
One shall lift up the soul from below to the pres-
ence immortal,
And will quicken the heart to worship, unseen,
the Eternal;
But the other will show the trial and triumph of
Heroes,
Singing into his strains the homage undying of
beauty.
Both as brothers shall go down the echoing hall
of the ages.
Echoing double one voice from the heart of
Greece and Judea.
Two are the aisles in the temple of song, Hellenic,
Hebraic,
One is the harmony under them both, the har-
mony human,
Tuning to musical life the Man and the God in
their struggle."

Slowly the poet of Hellas drew back to his seat
in the settle,
But his mind ran on in its might, though his body
was weary,
And he continued: "One thing more my spirit
must tell thee,
Hear now my prayer, O David, and call it the
prayer of Homer:

May the son ever be a much better man than his father!"

At the thought he suddenly turned and seemed
to be looking,
Though he was blind, he seemed to be looking and
prying about him :
" But I forget ! I have a new pupil, where is he ?
Hesperion ?
Where is Hesperion, dreamful youth of the neb-
ulous Northland ?
And I forget too my daughter, where is she ?
Praxilla ? Praxilla ?
Surely to-day she is roaming, my daughter, my
sunny Praxilla ! "

In a moment the crowd was moving and turning
and looking,
All would peep at the pair whom the poet had
coupled together ;
What he had joined in his words, they surmised
he had joined in his thoughts too,
Every boy in the school surmised what was going
to happen,
Every boy in the school blushed red as if he were
guilty,
Guilty of hiding away in his heart an arrow of
Eros,
Which had pricked him with jealousy's pang,
though slyly secreted.

First he peeped for his rival, but found no reward
for his peeping,
Saw no Hesperion, dreamful youth of the neb-
ulous Northland,
Then he would speak in low tones to his neigh-
bor, who had to make answer;
Each was disguising the timorous thought that
trembled within him,
Each was telling it too just through his careful
disguises;
Soon the whole school was a whisper, asking:
Where is Praxilla?
Soon the whole school was a whisper, replying,
Where is Hesperion?

Crabbed Typtodes, the schoolmaster, still
was present and looking,
But he nowhere saw what he looked for, the
daughter of Homer,
Whom he too would see and would sue in spite
of his wrinkles;
Teaching the verses of Homer, he weened he
could teach the fair daughter,
Writing Phœnician letters, he thought he would
write her a poem.
Vain is the effort, to-day he is wearied and
worried with waiting;
In his sandals he shuffles along to the side of
Mesander,

Whom he somehow thinks to be kin to himself
in the spirit;

Him he bespeaks on a point quite aloof from the
way of the lover:

“Long you have dwelt in Phœnicia, you say,
and know all its learning;

Have you the songs set down in the signs of
strange Alpha-Beta,

Cunning symbols of speech, that fix the fleet
breath of the singer?”

“Yes,” responded with joy the dexterous
spokesman Mesander,

“All have been set down in signs so that we
can hear them forever

Only by seeing them, look, the cunning Phœni-
cian symbols!

Thousands of years from now, yea, millions on
millions of ages,

Men will have but to look on these signs and will
hear King David,

Magical signs of the word, which make the good
poem eternal.

I have all of his songs scratched down on the
folds of this scroll here.”

Lowering still his tone, Typtodes spoke to Me-
sander,

Confidentially bending his head more near while
speaking:

“I have noted it well ; while you talked, I peeped
over your shoulder.

But I must tell you a secret, which nobody knows
of in Chios —

Long I have wrought to set down in these signs
the poems of Homer ;

What a task it has been — the burning by drops
of my heart’s blood !

It is done, but yesterday done, and to-day I have
brought it,

Hid in my bosom ; toilsome the work but I felt
it was worthy,

Though I find fault with the failings of Homer
and slash him to fragments ;

See ! I have poured out my life into writ, here
it is, O Mesander —

One small roll out of many, the rest I shall fetch
from the school-house,

One short day out of many, all which have sunk
into Lethe.”

“Surely no idler thou art,” said the Greek
from the island of Cyprus,

And thou movest along with the world, the
schoolmaster moves too,

Spirit needeth the letter, the letter too needeth
the spirit,

Homer will last, but the pedagogue Chian will not
be forgotten,

Who was the first to put into script the song of
the poet,

Making him sing forever in spite of the Fates,
the grim spinners.”

Both of the men had still something to say on
the matter of letters.

But they suddenly stopped when they heard the
voice of the poet

Not now chanting a musical strain to the Gods
and the Heroes,

But impatiently calling aloud, “Hesperion!
Praxilla!”

Twice he repeated, “Where is Hesperion! Where
is my daughter?”

“Here I am on this side,” soon spake up the
youth of the Northland,

“Here I am on the other,” responded the maiden
Praxilla.

Both of them spoke in their joy as they suddenly
sprang from an arbor,

Where they had hid from the crowd for a moment
of sweet conversation,

Words of the twain now blended together to
tenderest music,

And their voice was wedded in love, preluding
the marriage:

“For thy blessing we come, thy blessing, O
father Homerus.”

Then both kneeled at his side, brave youth and
beautiful maiden.

“Rapid work, my children, too rapid, and yet
I confirm it!

Who can catch and turn back in its flight the
arrow of Eros?

Well I foresaw what was coming, I knew in
advance the whole story.

Did you think because I was blind, I never could
see you?

All the while I could see you doing just what I
intended.

But enough! You have my approval, take now
my blessing!”

Laying each hand on a head, he rose up with
them together.

Standing between the twain, once more spoke
the poet to David:

“Thee I beseech, O Monarch, yet greater than
Monarch, a Singer,

Stay with me here, for to-morrow is given in
marriage my daughter;

Go to rest in my chamber and wake up renewed
in the morning,

Both of us then shall sing together the song of
the wedding,

Ere we send off the pair to the distant forests of
Northland.

Thou must give them thy God, the One, and his
high adoration,

I shall show them the Man, the beautiful Man in
his freedom.”

X.

Arania.

The Marriage.

ARGUMENT.

All come together in the morning for the wedding festival of Hesperion and Praxilla. The scholars have a choral dance in honor of the event; Glaucus and Demodocus confess their great disappointment. Sappho chants for the pair her last measures of love and good wishes. Typtodes brings as his bridal gift the poems of Homer written in the new alphabet. Homer and David give to the pair their blessing and with it their two books, which are to be borne to the new home, whither the happy couple now set forth on their journey.

Up rose the Sun in his car and lit the Ionian
heavens,
Driving the timorous Dawn far over the sea to the
westward,
Seeming to mount to the sky in flames that
burst from his glances
For some joy that he felt and imparted to earth
and to ocean.
Like a bridegroom he rose and put on his gar-
ments of splendor,
Gold he was strewing wherever he looked on the
land and the water.
Warm was the thrill as he reached from afar
with his radiant fingers,
Earth awoke at the touch and sprang up respond-
ing in music,

Every creature was singing, even still voices of
nature
Chanted the hymn of the Sun as he soared up
the sky in the morning.
Purple and scarlet and gold were his regal changes
of raiment,
Jewels he flung with his sheen in the lap of the
beautiful island,
Which peeped forth from the waves in a smile at
the sport of the sunbeams,
As from slumber it woke and lay on the bed of
the billows.
Chios he kissed in a rapture, as if his bride he
were kissing,
All the heart of the Sun was flowing to love and
to marriage,
As he glowed and he glanced down into the gar-
den of Homer.

Both of the poets had risen from sleep, the
Greek and the Hebrew,
And were sitting together, in joy saluting the
morning,
Which from earth and from heaven returned the
high salutation.
“Beautiful is this world of Jehovah,” shouted
King David.
“Praised be his name, for his law is the law which
endureth forever.”

“ Beautiful is this world of the Gods,” responded
Homerus,
“ Beautiful too is the man, divinely upbearing his
freedom.”

Thus they continued their talk, which ran of
itself into measure,
All of their speech was a song, and each of them
sang to the other.
Two were the strains on the tongue, yet both
reached down to one key-note.
Skillful Mesander translated the twain and added
his comment.

Soon they all had gathered together with David
and Homer,
Hearing the note of the East and the West in the
words of the masters.
Lovely Sappho was present, the soft-speaking
songstress of Lesbos,
But she was silent, for eagerly now she heard the
new message,
Heard the voice of the law as it fell from the
lips of the psalmist,
Though she felt that the singer himself was not
free of its judgment.
Still in her thought she did not upbraid him who
rose after falling,
Nor condemn what her own tender heart had told
her was human.

Shifty Typtodes, the pedagogue Chian, doth
 seem to be absent ;
No, he is coming, yonder he shuffles along in his
 sandals,
He has set down the poems of Homer in symbols
 Phœnician,
Though he won not the daughter, he must be a
 guest at her marriage.
Look ! he hastes up the path, and carries the
 rolls of his paper,
Rolls first made of the rind of the fen-born rush,
 the papyrus,
On which is written the word of the poet for
 ages hereafter ;
Book it is called, the scribbled peelings of rushes
 of Egypt.

Next were seen the beautiful youths who sang
 in a chorus,
Gracefully stepping along, attuning their dance
 to the song-beat,
All the youths of the school were there arrayed
 for the wedding,
Spotless they shone in white raiment falling in
 folds to their motion.
From the East and the West they had come, all
 joined the procession,
And they began the high song with a festal pray-
 er together,

Prayer beseeching the presence divine of the
God of Espousals:

“Hail Hymenæus, hail! O come to the island
of Chios,

Come to the glorious island of song that is sing-
ing thy praises!

Great is the need of thy presence to bless what
is going to happen,

For the lots of marriage are now to be drawn by
a maiden,

Rarest of maidens of Hellas, the beautiful daugh-
ter of Homer.

Be not absent, O deity, rule the caprices of
Fortune;

Hail Hymenæus, hail! make the tie of the pair
everlasting!”

David the King drew near, and spake to the
youth of the Northland,

“Speed thee afar to thy forests, and take this
maiden Hellenic,

Her thou must win to thy love, for thou never
canst marry a Jewess,

’Tis not allowed by the law — no hope thou canst
have for my daughter,

Whom I have left behind with the rest of the
daughters of Israel;

These we keep to ourselves for the glory and
praise of Jehovah.

But unrewarded thou shalt not pass from my
 presence this morning,
All that is best of myself, whatever is good in
 my nation,
I shall give as a present to thee and thy people
 forever.
It shall attune thee anew to its song when thy
 soul is discordant,
From thy fall it shall lift thee on high with fresh
 aspiration,
It shall stead thee in trial the sorest, in death it
 shall stead thee.
Now its words have been written in signs that
 came from Phœnicia,
Musical sounds of the voice have been set down
 in signs for the vision
On that Ægyptian peel of a rush, called Byblus,
 the Bible.
We have brought it along on our journey —
 Where is it, Mesander?"

Here the translator suddenly stopped his talk-
 ing Hellenic,
Spoke in Hebrew the word of reply which has
 not been translated.
Taking the folds of a curious roll written over
 with letters,
Looking the look of a victor, he handed it soon
 to the Monarch.

Meanwhile trembling in voice spake up good
father Homerus,
“ Now may life pass away, the end I have seen of
my living;
When his work has been done, not long the
mortal will tarry;
More cannot fall to my lot, my hours henceforth
are a passage;
After to-day I shall sing no more, the spirit
refuses;
Words cannot tell what I think, but bound the
flight of my vision;
Life I have loved, for it was a deed, and it was a
song too,
But it is done, and the time draws near — the
time of my silence,
When the sound of my song will be but an echo
repeating,
Ever repeating the voice which I flung on the
breezes of Hellas.
Daughter, go; I send thee far off to the folk of
the Northland,
Thither now bear my song, for it is my gift to
the ages;
May thy children be heirs of the lay and the life
of Greek Homer.”

Such were the words of the parent, and they
were never forgotten.

All of the company present were touched by the
tone of the farewell,
For they seemed to hear the refrain of a lay in
the distance,
Giving a soft response from beyond to the note
of the poet,
Who was singing to-day the last, last strains of
his swan-song.

Hark to the bardlings! a youth steps forth from
the line of the chorus,
With a discord in look and in heart — it was
high-born Glaucus,
Who from Lycia came, and now he sang to the
maiden:
“I have tried to win the hand of the daughter
of Homer;
How I longed to carry her off to the banks of
the Xanthus,
Where is my sweet sunny home by the banks of
the eddying Xanthus!
Honest my suit was to bear her away once more,
the Greek Helen,
Peacefully bring back the beautiful prize of the
world into Asia;
But I have lost, the Gods are against me, and
turn from my people;
All I have lost, I must now see the bride borne
off to the westward —

I the son of King Glaucus, and grandson of
Glaucus the Hero,
I who am sprung far back of the seed of Bel-
lerophon —
Hail, Hymenæus, thy blessing upon the daugh-
ter of Homer.”

Scarce had he ended, when from the opposite
side of the chorus
Stepped forth a youth of the West, in song and
in love his great rival,
It was Demodocus, son of Demodocus, Ithacan
rhapsode:
“I too sought for the hand of the beautiful
daughter of Homer,
From this isle I would bear her away to the
home of Ulysses,
Whence the old Greeks our fathers once came to
the rescue of Helen.
Great was the deed they did, the deed of the
Greeks, our fathers!
Beautiful Helen again I would rescue in fairest
Praxilla,
Coming over the sea from my home to the
island of Chios.
I have lost, let me go, I now shall become but a
swineherd,
Son unworthy of men who took the citadel
Trojan.

Hail, Hymenæus, thy blessing upon the daughter
of Homer."

Forward came Sappho, the Lesbian songstress,
the tenth among Muses,
Grace she revealed in her form and her speech,
the fourth among Graces,
Aye tenth Muse of the Muses, and aye fourth
Grace of the Graces,
As she sang to the pair mid the sweet low tones
of her cithern :

"Hail, Hymenæus, hail! make happy the
bride and the bridegroom!

May the souls of the twain be one thought, the
two lives be one living!

Make the marriage a presence, which they shall
dwell in forever.

May the love of to-day be also the love of to-
morrow!

You, O bride and bridegroom, you too I would
move by my prayer;

When you come to your home far over the border
of Hellas,

Sappho forget not, who was the first to join you
together,

Making the love of your hearts to flow in the
strains of her music,

Taking the hands of you both into hers and link-
ing the promise.

Daughter of Homer and son of the Northland,
remember the songstress,
Sappho the Lesbian singing the love of the youth
and the maiden,
Hail, Hymenæus! make the bond of the lovers
eternal!"

Soon Typtodes stepped forth, in his hand were
the rolls of his writing,
Faithful he brought the work of his life as his
gift at the nuptials,
Though the beautiful daughter he won not with
all of his wooing.
But he hath his reward, his gift shall not be for-
gotten.
Gruffly with a grimace he muttered: Hail, Hy-
menæus!
Into the hand of the poet he put the magical
symbols.
Then he withdrew from the place — not the least
was the schoolmaster's present;
As he passed out of sight, he flung down a tear
on the gravel;
Once he looked back at his rolls, his life-task,
sad at the parting.

Then spake Homer, giving the pair his last bene-
diction:
"Here, take my book, now writ by Typtodes in
letters Phœnician,

Keep it and let it still grow, one seed of your
future existence,
Showing the beautiful world of the Gods which
arose in our Hellas,
Showing what man must do with himself to build
up a freeman."

Then spake David, giving the pair his last ben-
ediction :

" Here, take my book, it too is written in letters
Phœnician,
By some scribe — I know not his name — em-
ployed in my household :
Keep it and let it still grow, one seed of your
future existence,
Showing the law of the world proclaimed in the
land of Judea,
Showing the God, the one only God, and his
worship in spirit."

So to the Northland they took the two books
of Homer and David,
Oldest and newest, twin books of all time, the
Greek and the Hebrew,
Lovingly bore them afar to the West, the home
of the nations,
Which shall kindle the light in their hearts and
carry it further,
Where the two singers of Eld shall still sing daily
their wisdom,
Voices resounding in millions of echoes from let-
ters Phœnician,

Bringing their song to the present and handing it
on to the future,
Ever renewing their strains in the soul that is
ready to hear them,
Known far better hereafter than ever in Greece
or Judea.

Then the pair set out — Hesperion son of the
Northland,
And Praxilla, fair maiden of Hellas, the daughter
of Homer,
Quitting the garden where grew the orange, the
fig and pomegranate,
Where the hills were a flutter of leaves of the
silvery olive.
Soon they came to the shore, and there lay the
boat of the bridal,
Covered with branches and leaves, and decked
with the flowers of Chios.
Seamen raised up the mast and steadied it firmly
with mainstays,
Then they spread out the sails to the wind and
took the direction.
Oars they dipped in the brine, for trial made
ready the rudder,
And the God sent a favoring breeze which blew
from the island,
Yet a sigh mid the joy of the day it would
whisper in snatches.
“Farewell forever, Praxilla my daughter! Fare-
well Hesperion!”

Light ran the ship as it cut with its keel
through the billowy waters,
Laughingly sparkled the sea in the stroke of the
vigorous oarsmen,
Over the rise and the fall of the ripples was rock-
ing the vessel,
Muffled sang the great deep, upheaving and bear-
ing its burden.
“Farewell forever, O Homer, my father! Fare-
well O Hellas.”

From the shore all the youths of the school
were gazing in sorrow,
Merrily still the vessel kept dancing away o’er
the billow,
That was the last day of school, the end had
come of their training;
Long they looked at the boat until it had van-
ished from vision,
Looked in the blue at the sail till lost in the haze
to the westward,
Wondering whither it went and whether again
they would see it.
When the small white speck of the ship had
twinkled to nothing,
Longing the scholars turned for the sight and the
speech of the poet,
But he was not to be seen, he had gone to his
home with King David.
Soon they too had dispersed, each went his own
way to his country.

Still the lovers sailed on far away from the gar-
dens of Chios,
Onward they went in their joy, behind them leav-
ing the islands,
Over the deep they sailed and came to the shore
of the mainland.
Quitting the ship and the sea, they plunged into
forest and desert,
Into the dangers of land far greater than perils
of water,
Fleeting across the wintery border of beauti-
ful Hellas,
Where it stretches beyond the abode of the Gods
on Olympus,
To the regions where drinking their whey dwell
the mare-milking Thracians,
Over the hills and the valleys away to the banks
of a river,
To the stream that is bearing the flood of the
wide-whirling Istros,
Still beyond and beyond, still over the plain and
the mountain,
Over vast lands to the seas, and over the seas to
the lands still,
Through the icied forests, through the tracts
of the frost-fields,
Still beyond and beyond, still over the earth and
its circles,
Onward they passed, the daughter of Homer and
son of the Northland —

Further and further they went, till they came to
the homes of his people,
Bringing two books in their journey, the gifts of
David and Homer,
Bringing two songs of the sunrise to sing to the
lands of the sunset,
Songs still singing of God in his foresight and
Man in his freedom,
Where the huge arms of the breakers are smiting
the shores of the Ocean,
Ever beyond and beyond in the stretch of their
strokes they are striking,
Striking the barrier of earth in the stress of their
strong aspiration,
Beating, forever repeating, the strokes of the in-
finite Ocean.

Epilogue

Good-bye to Chios.

Hearken, O Chios, home of the Homerids born of
thy Homer,

Who still dream of thine isle rocked to the sway
of his song,

Though on the world's farther half they be tuning
to Homer their heart-strings,

For thy sweet rhythmical mood trills now to me
as to him.

Radiant verses are gleaming like falshions aloft on
the summits,

Mighty heroical lines lighten through opaline
skies,

Heaving hexameters roll from the rise and the fall
of the sea swell,

Tender love epigrams lisp cadences low in be-
tween.

Plain and mountain and wave are a garland of
splendor majestic,

Circling the head of old Time laid on this sea's
tender lap;

Foliage, herd, and ship make a line of a musical
measure

Moving with harmonies sweet into one cast of
the eye.

O the transfusion of sound! the transfiguration of vision!

Every object of sense flashes to letters of light!
Whitest of sculpture is cut of the clouds over-
arching the heavens,

Which in a gallery high rounds the firmament's
gold;

There all the Gods are seen in sunny Olympian
conclave,

Glorious epiphanies sung still by old Homer.
to me.

Brightest of scripture is writ on the earth with a
pencil of sunbeams,

And the welken's white folds drop down unroll-
ing a scroll;

Many a line of the poet is graved on the burnished
horizon,

Words of the Muse built of stars nightly you
read in the sky,

Strains of high singers flow still from the liquid
Ionian heavens,

Out of each fountain are heard songs set with
fancies of old,

Weeds and thorns and brambles are hung with
emeralds precious,

Pebbles begin underfoot suddenly turning to
pearls;

Wisdom, the grave old sage, is diamonded over
and over

As he walks through the grove, bearing the
thought of the world.

Sorrowful Sipylus yonder is looking all pain to
the sculptor,

Rising to statue from stone, tragic with Niobe's
tears;

Happy Hymettus transfuses to song all the dew
of his honey,

As he sweeps to the plain from the clear home
of the Gods.

Yet this Nature is but the outermost garb of the
poem,

Which the body doth grace hinting the glories
within,

Nobly suggesting the soul in the refluent folds of
green drapery,

As it flowing through vales rolls to the tops of
the hills.

Only look up, wherever you are, you see the fair
temple

Which in the center is placed, raying out
hymns from its crest:

Fountain perennial, welling adown a wee Chian
hillock,

Thence overflowing Greek heights into the stream
of the world;

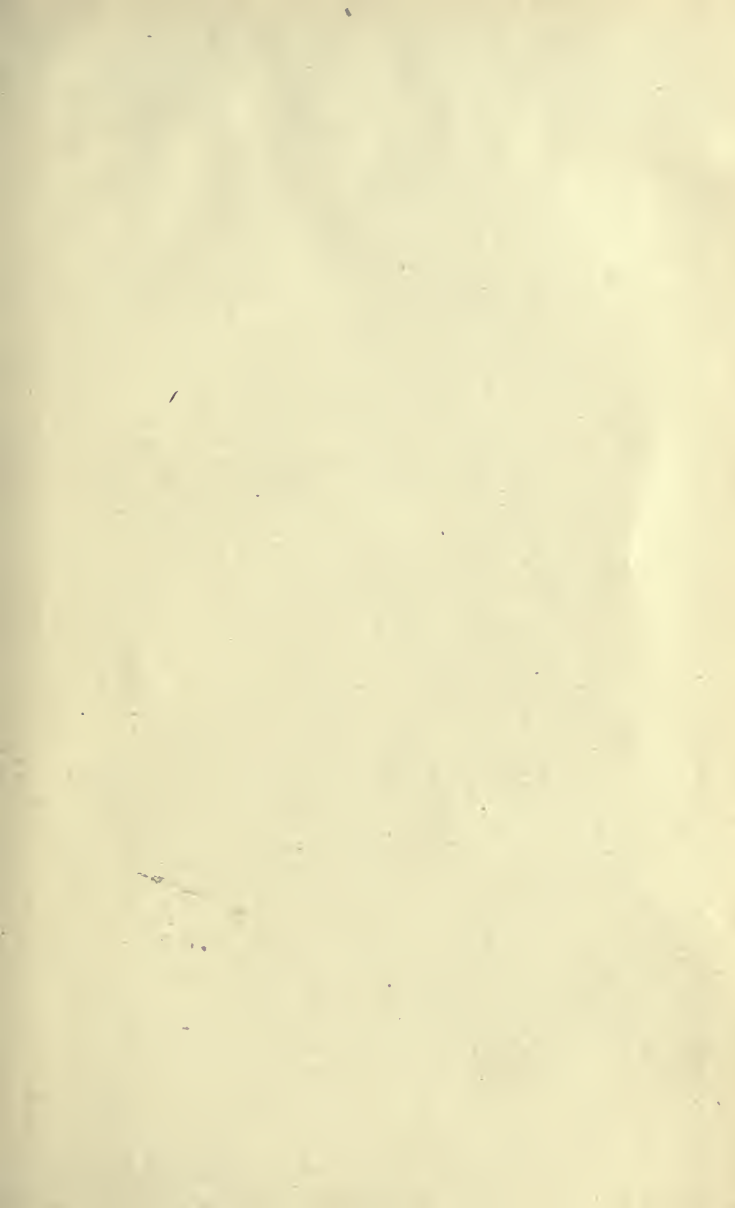
Waves it is sending of translucent smiles in
eternal processions,

Thousands of years it has filled all of this plain
with its joy

Up to the mountainous rim that lies on the earth
like a garland,

And embosoms the shrine in a long happy caress.

See the fair chorus of columns now dancing around
on the summit,
The full joy of the feast flows to the ends of the
plain,
Cincture of pillars by distance becomes a gay zone
of Greek maidens,
Festively dressed in white folds, reaching each
other the hand,
Speaking afar to the wayfarer lonely evengels of
beauty,
Moving to measures of song under melodious
skies.
Thither, O wanderer, haste from the vale, from
the mountain most distant,
Haste on the wings of the ship over the bond-
breaking seas,
Aught is reaching for thee far out of the heart of
this Hellas,
Fair as the youth of the world, wise as the old
age of Time,
Drawing thee up her Acropolis borne in fleet
kisses of sunbeams,
Till thou art set on its top radiant with poesy's
sheen.
Hark now the Homeric new attuning hexametral
glories,
How he dares in his strains Homer's high
daughter to woo.



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